

Contemporary Ethnographic Translation of Traditional Aboriginal Narrative:

Textualizations of the Northern Tutchone Story of Crow

Philippe Cardinal

A Thesis

In the Humanities

Program

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at

Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

September 2009

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Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-63409-7
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-63409-7

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary Ethnographic Translation of Traditional Aboriginal Narrative: Textualizations of the Northern Tutchone Story of Crow

Philippe Cardinal, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2009

This thesis is designed as an encounter between translation studies and ethnography. It demonstrates how a cross-fertilization between those two disciplines can be achieved for the benefit of both. If several of the research methods employed to gather the data analysed are those currently used by translation studies specialists investigating all manner of translation, others, such as field research, are typical of ethnography. And while some of the theoretical framework upon which the thesis builds its argumentation is essentially that of translation studies, translation theories formulated by practitioners of anthropology have not been ignored.

The thesis takes the form of a case study. Its object of inquiry is an ethnographer's recording of the telling of an age-old narrative by an Aboriginal elder in his own Northern Tutchone language, and the subsequent translation, textualization and publication of this narrative into English and into French. It establishes why and how this elder and this ethnographer agreed to collaborate to transform this traditional narrative into two learned publications.

The central question that the thesis asks is this: How did a combination of linguistic, social, cultural, historical, institutional and political constraints operate on each state of the text of this traditional Tutchone story

cycle to make it such as we find it in the published books? Manifestations of those limiting factors are identified and their effects are assessed in each state of the text as well as in the paratext of the forewords and afterwords of the English and French publications. Such restrictions are moreover shown not to be confined to this particular case since analogous forces are demonstrated to have similarly informed other recent Yukon ethnographic encounters.

RÉSUMÉ

La traduction ethnographique contemporaine des récits autochtones traditionnels : les textualisations de l'histoire du corbeau des Tutchones septentrionaux

Philippe Cardinal, doctorant
Université Concordia, 2009

Cette thèse est conçue comme une rencontre entre la traductologie et l'ethnographie. Elle démontre comment un échange de procédés entre ces deux disciplines peut être opéré au profit de chacune. Si bon nombre des méthodes de recherche ayant servi à la collecte des données analysées sont celles qu'utilisent couramment les traductologues pour étudier toutes sortes de traductions, d'autres, notamment les recherches de terrain, relèvent typiquement de l'ethnographie. Et si le cadre théorique sur lequel la thèse fonde son argumentation est essentiellement celui de la traductologie, les théories traductives que les anthropologues ont formulées sont également prises en compte.

La thèse est essentiellement une étude de cas. L'objet étudié est l'enregistrement effectué par un ethnographe de la narration d'un récit séculaire par un aîné dans sa propre langue tutchone septentrionale et la traduction, la textualisation et la publication de cette narration en anglais et en français qui s'ensuivit. La thèse explique comment et pourquoi cet ethnographe et cet aîné collaborèrent à transformer ce récit traditionnel en deux livres savants.

La question centrale posée est la suivante : comment la combinaison d'une série de contraintes linguistiques, sociales, culturelles, historiques, institutionnelles et politiques a-t-elle opéré sur chacun des états du texte de ce cycle d'histoires traditionnelles tutchones pour en faire ce que l'on trouve dans ces publications? La thèse relève les manifestations de chacun de ces facteurs restrictifs et en mesure les effets sur chaque état du texte et du paratexte des préfaces et postfaces de chacune des publications. Finalement, en établissant que des forces analogues ont également agi sur le déroulement d'autres collaborations ethnographiques yukonnaises contemporaines, la thèse démontre que de tels facteurs ne sont pas limités au seul cas étudié.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most of all, I want to thank my major advisor, Dr. Sherry Simon, whose knowledgeable advice and guidance kept me on track throughout. I also want to express my gratitude to Dr. Dominique Legros whose generosity made this enquiry possible. I am likewise grateful to Ms. Lucy McGinty and Ms. Mary McGinty without whose collaboration my research in Pelly Crossing would have failed. Sincere thanks to Dr. Gavin Taylor and Dr. John Leavitt for the helpful advice. Sincere thanks also to Ms. Emma Alfred and Ms. Beverly J. Brown who did what they could to help with my project. A very special thank you to Dr. Ruth Gotthardt who helped me obtain research funding and who generously shared her knowledge regarding the recent history of Aboriginal/Euro-Canadian relations in Yukon. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the *Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture* (FQRSC) for the doctoral fellowship as well as the supplementary grant that made my Yukon field research possible. Last, but most definitely not least, I am particularly grateful to Mrs. Lizzie Hall who, in her own quietly dignified fashion, has earned my utmost respect.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Mr. Tommy McGinty, raconteur extraordinaire, and his Selkirk First Nation of Pelly Crossing and Minto.

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INTRODUCTION

I have often wondered why so little cross-fertilization has occurred between the two academic disciplines that share the most significant interest in translation, ethnography and translation studies. Granted that, on the face of it, translation is more important for translation studies than it is for anthropology, but that the two have largely failed to communicate meaningfully is all the more unfortunate that each has much to offer the other. Accordingly, I conceived of this thesis as essentially an encounter between translation studies and ethnography. If many of the research methods used to gather the data analysed are those currently used by translation studies specialists investigating all manner of translation, others, such as field research, are typical of ethnography. And while some of the theoretical framework upon which the thesis builds its argumentation is essentially that of translation studies, translation theories formulated by practitioners of anthropology have not been ignored.

The thesis takes the form of a case study. Its primary object of inquiry is one particular ethnographer's recording of the telling of a traditional narrative by an Aboriginal elder in his own Northern Tutchone language, and the subsequent translation, textualization and publication of this particular telling into English and into French. It retraces the events and circumstances attending this encounter between this individual Northern Tutchone Athapaskan elder, Tommy McGinty, and this individual ethnographer, Dominique Legros. It establishes why and how they agreed to collaborate in the recording of the telling and in the translation, textualization and

publication of what Dr. Legros sometimes calls “the Tutchone Genesis” (1999: 16), and which Tutchone elders still habitually term “the story of crow.” The thesis also probes the circumstances attending the subsequent French translation of the published English version, and its publication by Gallimard, a major French international publishing house.

The reasoning behind the dissertation is this: a thorough analysis of this recording, translation, textualization and publication of a major cycle of an Aboriginal nation’s traditional narratives will serve at least two main purposes. First, it will contribute significantly toward establishing what are now the norms by which traditional Aboriginal narratives are being told, recorded, translated, textualized and published, and whether these norms have changed over time. And second, it will produce a model that may inspire future studies. It is additionally hoped that this and further studies will yield useful data on the basis of which to formulate ethically sound standards by which social scientists’ and Aboriginal communicators’ collaborations might henceforward flourish. A search of the literature failed to unearth any previous study of this precise nature in any academic discipline. It is therefore with a keen sense of responsibility towards my chosen discipline, academia in general and Aboriginal Peoples in particular that I have undertaken it.

These are uneasy times in Euro-Canadian / First Nations relations—though to write this is to venture perilously close to ethnocentrism for, in Canada, relations between Europeans and Aboriginals have never been easy. How could it be otherwise when they have largely been and fundamentally remain relations between dominators and dominated? Indeed,

to even speak of postcolonialism in a Canadian context is bound to be misleading, for if it is true that, on the one hand, the former European imperial powers that once ruled this country appear to have departed for good, for most Aboriginal-Canadians, on the other hand, the imperialism of France and England have simply been exchanged for the neo-imperialism of the Euro-Canadian governments that replaced them. As I wrote the first draft of this introduction (mid-May 2007), news headlines seemed to bear this out. In Montreal's French-language newspapers, as in virtually all the national media of both official languages, that week's major headlines referred to a speech given before Toronto's Canadian Club by Assembly of First Nations' Grand Chief Phil Fontaine. The May 16, 2007 *National Post* headline of a Paul Samym article reads: "Chief's call for calm arrives with a warning... Appeal to government; 'Our people won't be put off any longer'." The sub-heading reads, "OTTAWA — Native leader Phil Fontaine appealed for calm even as he issued a warning yesterday about a coming summer of escalating native protests." A background story in the same issue (echoed in virtually every media outlet in the country) referred to a *YouTube* video showing how to stop a train using a simple copper wire. The second paragraph of this May 16, 2007 *National Post* article reads:

Grainy footage, entitled "When Justice Fails, Stop the Rails," appeared over the weekend, apparently posted by a group professing sympathy for the Bay of Quinte Mohawks who shut down the crucial Toronto-Montreal corridor on April 20 to protest a quarry and housing development on disputed land. The video shows a gloved individual placing thick copper around the rails on a tracks (sic) in the dark in order to trigger safety sensors and delay but not necessarily derail passing trains—all in the name of drawing attention to the slow pace of more than 800 unresolved land claims across the country.

In Yukon, tensions between Euro-Canadians and Aboriginals might perhaps be somewhat less tense than they formerly were now that an

“Umbrella Final Agreement” was reached in 1993 between the Canadian and Yukon Governments and four of the 14 Yukon First Nations and the remaining 10 are gradually reaching their own final agreements with federal and territorial governments. But more than a century of barely repressed resentment cannot be erased with the stroke of a pen, though it will surely be the start of a genuine healing process.

For Tommy McGinty’s own Selkirk First Nation of Pelly Crossing and Minto, the final agreement (after secret ballot ratification vote by a majority of all 16 years and older members of the Selkirk First Nation) was formally signed at Minto on the 21st day of July 1997 by Patrick VanBibber, Chief of the Selkirk First Nation, Dan VanBibber, Principal Elder of the Selkirk First Nation, the Honourable Jane Stewart, then Canadian Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Honourable Piers McDonald, then Government Leader of the Yukon Territory. To quote elder Lizzie Hall of the Selkirk First Nation (SFN) “We’ve settled the land claims. That’s good! Now we can work at setting things right again¹”. Part of “setting things right again” includes negotiating those clauses of the Final Agreement that the parties had agreed to set aside temporarily so as to hasten a conclusion to the negotiations. One such recently settled clause is the *Lútsāw Wetland Habitat Protection Area Management Plan*, signed April 20, 2006 by current SFN Chief, Darin Isaac, and on May 2, 2006, by Dennis Fentie, current Yukon Environment Minister and Territorial Premier. With this clause the Yukon government and the Selkirk First Nation agree to jointly manage these

¹ Personal communication, July 4, 2006

lakes that have always been crucial to the SFN's material and cultural well being.

Among the things that the *Łútsāw Wetland Habitat Protection Area Management Plan* "sets right again," the names of these lakes, formerly known as the "Von Wilczek Lakes," so named by Lieutenant Fredrick Schwatka of the United States Army who travelled down the Yukon River in 1883 in search of evidence of the fate of the Franklin expedition, have now officially reverted back to their original Northern Tutchone name of "Łútsāw Lakes." And the main individual lakes of the chain, known to Euro-Canadians throughout the twentieth century as "Jackfish Lake, Rock Island Lake, Duck Lake, Long Lake, Stinkin' Lake, Muskrat Lake" and "Cow Moose Lake," have reverted to their Northern Tutchone names of "Łútsāw Män"², Tthe Ndu Män, Chät Män, Män Ts'andoä, Män Dinnts'ik, Dzäna Män" and "Dezra Män," respectively (Lutsaw Management Plan Website). Selkirk First Nation elders like Lizzie Hall interpret this name reversion as an acknowledgement by the dominant society that Aboriginal traditions and the wisdom of Aboriginal Peoples will henceforth be accorded the respect they deserve.

In 1984 when Tommy McGinty first taped what Dominique Legros would later call "the Tutchone charter narrative"³ (1999: 16), Yukon Aboriginal land claims and self government negotiations had already limped along for eleven years. When Legros later videotaped Mr. McGinty's retelling of the same story, Tutchone babies born in 1973, the year when the

² Due to the limited number of accented characters available on my IBM clone computer, I am compelled to spell certain Northern Tutchone words such as "Män" without their full complement of accents.

³ Note that though Dr. Legros used this and several other such variants at different times, the name that he most often used was simply "the story of crow".

negotiations began, were already old enough to register for the Yukon College extension course of which his telling was a part. The same individuals would be 24 years old in 1997 when they were finally asked to ratify the proposed final agreement. Some current elders report that the Selkirk people let out a collective sigh of relief following the ratification and it may be that, along with that sigh, the long pent-up feeling of resentment was also finally allowed into the open. And this may be why an important part of the ongoing "setting things right again" process that Mrs. Hall is referring to involves taking a close look at every aspect of all past and present interactions between Selkirk First Nation people and any and all representatives of the mainstream Euro-Canadian society. This includes everything from a reassessment of how Euro-Canadian-operated businesses have functioned within SFN-managed lands in the past and how they should function in the future, to how academics and government scientists of the past were allowed to conduct research within the area now under SFN Government control without restriction and how and under what specific terms permission to conduct such research may be granted in future. Especially subject to SFN Government reassessment, and indeed to a majority of other Canadian First Nations' as well, is the vexing matter of the divulgence of "Aboriginal traditional knowledge" to social and other scientists.

Widely held among contemporary Canadian Aboriginals, including those of the Selkirk First Nation is this belief: In the past, scientific researchers would show up on the reserve to query elders about their culture and traditional knowledge. The elders, always exquisitely polite folk, would listen carefully, and then generously tell them all that they wanted to know.

These scientists would then leave, write copyrighted books and articles, “invent” new medicines, new procedures, and so on, which they would patent and sell for a great deal of money. And never, not even once, did they ever share any of that money with the elders or with the nations whose original collective ideas they had been. Worse, they seldom, if ever credited their Aboriginal collaborators, taking most or all of the credit for themselves. Indeed, most of them never even bothered ever showing up on the reserve again (see for example Vine Deloria, Jr. 1969; 1996). And this, many Aboriginals now say, never prevented these outsiders from presuming to speak on behalf of Aboriginal peoples about whom, more often than not, they knew very little, and the little that they thought they did know, they had often got all wrong anyway. In recent years, for example, scientists and other scholars have increasingly sought Aboriginal traditional ecological knowledge, or TEK, as a way of completing their research with data unavailable from any other source. Aboriginals, however, have often been less than enthusiastic:

Organizations representing indigenous peoples voiced objections to the use of TEK on the grounds that it violates their intellectual property rights. Precisely what they mean by this is hard to ascertain. Sometimes critics object to the circulation of information that they define as culturally sensitive. More often, though, references to intellectual property reflect a belief that TEK has inherent economic value (Brown, 2003, 207).

As an early contributor to the current debate, Vine Deloria, Jr. once suggested one possible way in which anthropologists might fairly compensate the Aboriginals whose traditional knowledge they sought:

I would advocate a policy to be adopted by Indian tribes which would soon clarify the respective roles of anthropologists and tribes. Each anthro desiring to study a tribe should be made to apply to the tribal council for permission to do his duty. He would be given such permission only if he raised as a contribution to the tribal budget an amount of money equal to the amount he proposed to spend on his study. Anthropologists would thus become

productive members of Indian society instead of ideological vultures (1969, 95).

At this time, the SFN is reassessing such past collaborations as that of Dominique Legros with Tommy McGinty. This is an ongoing process and is by no means the only or even one of the most pressing of the issues that the SFN Government must grapple with at this time. As of this writing, no official research protocol has yet been formulated by the Selkirk First Nation. Because of this, any request by a representative of the mainstream Euro-Canadian society (of which I, of course, am one) to carry out any kind of research with any of the SFN people is treated with much caution by the SFN Government. Consequently, and in the absence of an official research protocol, no permissions are currently being granted by the SFN Government⁴.

Fortunately, the McGinty family is also trying to come to terms with its patriarch's collaboration⁵ with Dr. Legros. It is therefore at the McGinty family's own specific request that I undertook my work with Mrs. Hall, who, not incidentally, happens to be Tommy McGinty's matrilineal niece. In Northern Tutchone traditional kinship reckoning, a man's matrilineal niece or nephew—in other words his own sister's child—is considered far more closely related to him than even his own children. In the Tutchone tradition, a

⁴ Note that before I could do research in Yukon I also had to apply for a research permit from the Yukon government. Such applications are routinely submitted by officials to the Aboriginal nation involved, if any, for comments and possible objections. In my case, comments must have been relatively favourable and objections few since I was granted my permit within roughly three months of applying. Ironically, I first learned that my research permit would soon be arriving in the mail from a Selkirk First Nation official rather than from a Yukon government official. In return for the research permit, Yukon government representatives requested a copy of this thesis.

⁵ Tommy McGinty passed away in 1993.

person automatically always belongs to her or his mother's moiety⁶; consequently, a man's niece or nephew is perforce a member of his own moiety, while his children—whose mother is always a member of the opposite moiety—necessarily always belong to their mother's—or opposite to his own—moiety (Dominique Legros, personal communication).

In return for their collaboration, I gave the McGinty family representatives my word that I would perform the most honest and thorough analysis of the McGinty/Legros collaboration and everything attending it and its aftermath that I am capable of doing. I also promised them that I would investigate the validity of their grievances concerning the book resulting from the McGinty/Legros collaboration, its content and certain issues attending its publication—such as copyright and royalties. A draft version of my report to the McGinty family and to the SFN Government is included in Appendix 4.

For the Northern Tutchone People, the traditional story that is at the heart of the thesis, the story of crow, is the story of how an extra-ordinary being called crow⁷, who has the dual functions of re-creator of the world and trickster, and who, shortly after the end of time on a previous earth that was destroyed through universal flooding (Tommy McGinty to Dominique Legros: taped on October 19, 1990; unpublished), reorganised the world at the beginning of time on the present earth. Thanks to his *zhāak* or special powers⁸, crow, who had been present in the old world, had known that a

⁶ Social scientists use the word "moiety" (after the French "moitié") to designate each of the two descent groups into which the population of certain human groups fall.

⁷ The word "crow" is misleading, for the extra-ordinary bird in question was/is no crow at all but actually *corvus corax*, the common raven, also known as the northern raven. The error is easily explained in that there being no crows in Yukon, early white settlers and gold seekers mistook their much larger cousins, the locally ubiquitous ravens, for crows and named them accordingly. The name stubbornly persists.

⁸ For an explanation of the Tutchone notion of *zhāak* or power, see Legros 2007b.

deadly universal flood was in the offing and had contrived to survive long enough to coerce a seal into diving down and bringing back to the surface a quantity of soil, sand, rock, driftwood and even plants that crow then spread all over the globe, thereby creating the present world. Crow then went on to lay out the lakes and rivers and to populate them with fish. He also assigned each species its respective habits, foods and habitat. He stole the sun from a creature who had kept it hidden selfishly and placed it up in the sky, thereby creating daylight. He found human males⁹, divided them into males and females and gave them their laws, taboos and customs. All of this and considerably more occurs in the crow stories that Mr. McGinty told Dominique Legros in 1984 and in 1990/91. His telling also includes a number of crow's highly entertaining, rambunctiously licentious adventures. In brief, the Tutchone story of crow is nothing short of the restoration of our world and its inhabitants. In the hands of as accomplished a storyteller as everyone readily acknowledges Tommy McGinty to have been—and his videotaped performances reveal him to have been a highly competent showman indeed—the Tutchone “Genesis” is never anything as stolid as its Biblical counterpart can sometimes be made to appear. It is a highly entertaining story that still has the power to keep even today's Tutchone audiences spellbound for as long as the storyteller chooses¹⁰. Even now the story of crow remains far more than a merely entertaining story; to the Tutchone it is

⁹ According to Dominique Legros, crow created neither humans nor any of the animals, birds or fish, except for two types of birds, which he made out of pre-existing leaves. All the others he found already there. (Personal communication)

¹⁰ If audience reaction to Dominique Legros' own retelling of the crow makes women episode in French at the Montreal 2004 Canadian launch of the Gallimard edition is any indication, White audiences are just as enthralled by a telling of the crow story as Aboriginal audiences are.

still the true story of the way that everything began long ago and continues even today. And if the missionaries and the preachers speak of Jesus and the Bible, according to elders like Tommy McGinty, it only confirms the truth of the story of crow since, says Mr. McGinty, Jesus is really none other than crow reincarnated as Jesus by having himself reborn of a virgin named Mary (Tommy McGinty to Dominique Legros: taped October 19, 1990; unpublished). All this will be discussed in subsequent chapters. For now, let us simply state that to anthropologists and other social scientists, a story such as this is generally regarded as a myth.

But this thesis is not only of interest to the McGinty family and the Selkirk First Nation; by thoroughly analysing the translations and textualizations of Northern Tutchone elder Tommy McGinty's narration of the story of crow, the thesis demonstrates how translation studies can illuminate a complex problem that has always been part of ethnography but has not yet received the full attention it deserves. It is a problem that some ethnographers have already grappled with, but which ethnography has thus far failed to resolve satisfactorily. Many ethnographers have defined their discipline's main objective as "translating culture." Richard Rottenburg argues for example that "the business of ethnography can be considered to be about the translatability of narratives on the meaning of life and the world from one cultural frame of reference to another" (2003, 30). A potential misunderstanding attending a statement such as Rottenburg's lies in that when anthropologists speak of translating culture, their meaning is not always precisely the same. Sometimes they are speaking of a mode of translation whereby the words by which a cultural narrative was originally told

are replaced with the nearest equivalent words in a language other than that of the original narrator. Sometimes they are speaking of a mode of translation whereby a given population's cultural customs and beliefs are explained by means of comparing them to the closest equivalent cultural customs and beliefs of the population to whom those anthropologists are addressing their words. In the latter case anthropologists are really attempting to make the customs and beliefs of the other culture understandable to members of their own by showing how the cultural customs and beliefs of the original culture are similar to and how they differ from their own. Sometimes anthropologists use the expression "translating culture" metaphorically, in the sense that here the anthropologist does not necessarily translate the words of the other culture *per se*; instead, by describing the behaviour, the institutions, the cultural manifestations, and so on of that other culture, she interprets that culture for the benefit of the members of her own or for that of her fellow anthropologists, or both. To further add to the confusion, when anthropologists speak of "translating culture," they are often referring to two or more of these modes of translation at the same time. To avoid all confusion, the thesis treats all of these modes as somewhat different, but closely related translational activities. It takes this stance in accordance with Gideon Toury's well-known definition: "a translation will be any target language text which is presented or regarded as such within the target system itself, on whatever grounds" (Toury 1982, 27; cf. Toury 1980, 14, 37, 43-45; quoted in Tymoczko 2002, 15).

Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah has several modes of anthropological translation in mind when he writes:

...the grand problem, which is at the heart of the anthropological enterprise: How do we understand and represent the modes of thought and action of other societies, other cultures? Since we have to undertake this task from a Western baseline so to say, how are we to achieve 'the translation of cultures,' i.e., understand other cultures as far as possible in their own terms but in our language, a task which also ultimately entails the mapping of ideas and practices onto Western categories of understanding... (1990: 3).

Tambiah is well aware of the challenge that anthropology faces, i.e., in order to make another culture understandable to the members of one's own, there exists no other way to explain this other culture's ideas and practices than to show in what ways they are similar and how they differ from Western ideas and practices. As Tambiah also notes, anthropology does not only attempt to achieve the "translation of cultures," but it also translates the "terms," or the words, by which members of non-Western cultures describe their ways of life and world views to anthropologists. And anthropologists, furthermore, select which particular members of the cultures studied they deem to be leading representatives of, and/or particularly knowledgeable about, their cultures and whose words they deem worthy of being recorded, translated and textualized into a Western language. It is also well to keep in mind an additional complicating factor, one that ethnographers are often loath to even mention in their ethnographies, i.e., that they are sometimes reduced to "making do" with the only informants who deign collaborate with them, and who may not always be the most knowledgeable or even the most reliable members of the culture studied. The problem of anthropology that the thesis addresses therefore is a problem of translation and textualization. Talal Asad has given these issues considerable thought. He writes:

One difference between the anthropologist and the linguist in the matter of translation is perhaps this: that whereas the latter is immediately faced with a specific piece of discourse produced within the society studied, a discourse that is *then* textualized, the former must construct a discourse as a cultural text in

terms of meanings *implicit* in a range of practices. The construction of cultural discourse and its translation thus seem to be facets of a single act (1986: 160).

If any conventional translation is itself already always problematic (the translation of any source language utterance is routinely achieved by replacing it with its closest natural equivalent utterance in the target language, and yet, as every translator well knows, there is no such thing as an exact equivalent), ethnographic translation is doubly problematic for not only does the ethnographer translate from one language to another, but, as Asad rightfully points out, the ethnographer must first create a cultural discourse in the source language before it can be translated, and this, of course, adds a second level of intervention. But the complexity does not end there, for ethnographers must furthermore also first select who in the culture will serve as their informants (a third layer of intervention), and they routinely also select which of their informants' utterances among many they deem best suited to serve as building blocks in the construction of the cultural discourses (a fourth level) that they then translate (see also Wolf 2002, 182-3). If any translation is already always problematic, ethnographic translation, routinely subjected to four or even more distinct layers of intervention even before the actual translation, is therefore quadruply or even more problematic.

The thesis is inspired by a long-standing curiosity regarding the recording, translating, editing and publishing of Aboriginal traditional narratives. On Saturday March 18, 2006, I sent Mary McGinty an email in which I introduced myself and explained why I was seeking her collaboration. The main part of the email read as follows:

Hi Mary

First, let me introduce myself: My name is Philippe Cardinal. I am that student that Dominique Legros told you about.

As Dominique told you, I am studying just how carefully anthropologists and other academics have been translating the words of First Nations elders. I am also trying to find out if, after they go back to their universities and are far away from Aboriginal territory, these academics are still treating the words and the wishes of the elders who worked with them with all due and proper respect.

You see, these university professors are telling the Canadian people that they are being respectful of the words and wishes of Aboriginal elders. The problem with that for most Canadians is that the elders are so far away that they have no way of finding out for themselves if this is true. And that is why I have decided to make it the subject of my university study. Many people also wonder what First Nations people think about all that. I've been wondering about that too. And that's why I asked Dominique to allow me free access to all the tapes of his interactions with Selkirk First Nation elders, the main one of whom was your father, Tommy McGinty. Dominique, as you know, agreed to cooperate fully with my investigation.

I will be coming out to your area at the end of next April and will be staying until around the end of the year. If you would allow it, I would be pleased to meet you, and, if we get along well, you might perhaps be willing to answer a few of my questions about your father's work with Dominique Legros. Of course, if you should decide otherwise, I will not insist¹¹.

This was a truthful summary of many of the questions that had long troubled me. As I hit the "send" button, my fingers were metaphorically crossed that Mary's response would be positive because here was a genuine opportunity to obtain real answers about a recent case. As I wrote Mary, one of those questions had to do with how closely the original narrative the elder had told paralleled the published version. I was also very curious about why

¹¹ This email was my follow up to an earlier email that Dr. Legros had sent to Mary McGinty to introduce me to her. Here is the main part of Dr. Legros' email: "Hi Mary, You remember the student I mentioned to you. He wanted to come visit you and your family sometime this spring. His name is Philippe Cardinal. He will now start to transfer onto cd-rom or DVD-ROM the marriage tapes your dad did in the band office hall (I hope to find them all among my copies, but the quality from copies will not be that great you know). It could be ready in a few weeks (He still has to learn how to do video tapes on DVD-ROM and it will slow him down a bit). Now did you manage to identify who still has the originals in Pelly? Philippe is a PhD student whose specialty is translation, not anthropology. He is particularly interested in how First Nations elders' words are being translated by anthropologists and other academics. Some of the questions he asks in his PhD thesis is how respectful have the translators been? Have the translators translated only the actual words of the elders or have they added or taken away some of the elders' words? Are the known wishes of the elders about what should and what should not be done with their words been respected? And so on.... I personally accept in advance the criticisms Philippe will not fail to raise about my own writing work. This is the way to progress and improve. And where I made mistakes he will be able to tell and rectify the situation" (included at Dr. Legros' request).

an elder like Tommy McGinty would decide to tell a series of stories to an anthropologist. Familiar as I was with the Aboriginal reciprocity custom (more on that custom later); I suspected that the remuneration that he received was probably not the main factor. It had to be something that was really important to him personally, I reasoned, and his daughter might be able to tell me about that. In addition, I eagerly awaited the chance to ask the McGintys and other SFN members what they thought of Legros' publications of Tommy McGinty's story of crow. As already mentioned, doing research in Pelly Crossing did not prove to be as uncomplicated as I'd hoped. Luckily, Mary and her family had concerns of their own about the Legros/McGinty collaboration, some of which coincided sufficiently with my own for Mary to arrange a meeting between me and Lizzie Hall, and working and talking with Mrs. Hall would in turn make it possible for me to eventually piece together many of the reasons behind Tommy McGinty's willingness to work with Dominique Legros. Lizzie Hall's translation of Tommy McGinty's taped Tutchone narration as recorded by Dominique Legros in August 1984¹² also provided a baseline text that made it possible to determine what modifications occurred in the transformation of an orally told Northern Tutchone traditional story into a traditional Tutchone story told/written in English, and then into a Tutchone story told/written in French. And once the changes brought to the story as it was first recorded are known, it becomes possible to try and determine why such changes were made. This is how, in addition to the questions summarised in the email to

¹² Please note that I only use the word "first" in the sense that this was the first of several subsequent tellings of the story of crow by Tommy McGinty that were also recorded by Dominique Legros. I do not in any way mean to imply that that was the first ever version told of this traditional Aboriginal story, for if there ever was a truly "first ever" version of the story of crow it is of course lost in the mists of time.

Mary McGinty, the major question asked by this thesis became this: How did a combination of linguistic, social, cultural, historical, institutional and political constraints operate on each state of the text of this traditional Tutchone story to make it such as we find it in the published books?

As I will show, the effects of those constraints are detectable in each state of the text as well as in the paratext of the forewords and afterwords of the English and French publications of this traditional Northern Tutchone story. These kinds of restrictions are not unique to the Legros/McGinty collaboration. Analogous forces also operated in other similar ethnographic encounters of the recent past. For example, when ethnographer Catharine McClelland recorded Southern Yukon Aboriginals' traditional narratives in writing, she had no choice but to do it in English because she was not fluent in any of her collaborators' first languages. Because of this lack of fluency she often found herself relying on her informants' goodwill. At times, this had the drawback of reducing the completeness of her "translation" of her informants' cultures. In translation studies terms, her lack of fluency resulted in an undeterminable number of losses. On July 27, 1948, for example, McClelland attended an evening of public storytelling by Southern Tutchone elder Johnny Fraser who told episodes of his nation's version of the story of crow. In deference to her presence, Fraser narrated almost entirely in English except for one notable exception. McClelland writes, "[O]ne part of the story incorporates an incident which Johnny and others evidently considered risqué. It always caused gales of laughter among those who told or heard it, but was never translated for me, even though I asked" (2007-1, 16). In a note accompanying this passage, McClelland speculates that the teller expurgated

that part of the story in English by omitting to translate it as a way of protecting the young white female anthropologist's (supposed) susceptibility to risqué passages (ibid.).

As I intend to show, linguistic limitations also influenced the production of each state of the text of Tommy McGinty's story of crow, from Legros' initial recording of McGinty's narration in Northern Tutchone to his own translation of the English publication into French. Tommy McGinty spoke a "fluent", though very basic, low register "Yukon steamboat English". He was however considered one of the most knowledgeable speakers of the Northern Tutchone language¹³. Dominique Legros understands a number of Northern Tutchone words and expressions, but he is by no means fluent in that language. He is reasonably competent in English, but not in the way that a native speaker is. He does however have a superior command of French, his native language. Unfortunately, Tommy McGinty knew no French at all. This never prevented the two men from communicating reasonably well together, but such language limitations couldn't but result in occasional misunderstandings. According to Lizzie Hall, for example, at one point in his taped narration¹⁴, McGinty says that crow spots a piece of "bedrock" (in the geological sense of that word) sticking out of the surrounding water, but according to the 1984 tape's transcription Legros first understands him to say, "Bear Rock" but McGinty makes him understand that he is mistaken before miming his meaning, though judging by Mrs. Hall's retranslation, it is by no

¹³ McGinty collaborated with Yukon Native Language Centre linguist John Ritter to produce *The Selkirk Indian Language* (Northern Tutchone) *Noun Dictionary*.

¹⁴ Dr. Legros kindly let me make copies of all the existing audiocassette tapes of his collaboration with Tommy McGinty. He also provided me with copies of the original transcriptions of his 1984 tapes. These transcriptions were produced by Legros' student research assistants.

means certain that this fully cleared the misunderstanding, as may be observed in the following verbatim transcriptions:

T.M.

And pretty soon he fly... that's the one they call Bear Rock. Only one piece sticking out he see.□

D.L.

Bear Rock?□

T.M.

Bear Rock.□

D.L.: Bill?□

T.M.

Bear Rock, something like that.□

D.L.

Shra-theh?□ [Northern Tutchone for "bear Rock"]

T.M.: No, [inaudible at 100]. Ground come up on it under here.

According to my transcription Mrs. Hall's retranslation is as follows:

LH: So that's what they call the bedrock...

PC: Okay, okay, I thought he was saying "Bear Rock", "bedrock"!¹⁵

LH: Yeah.

PC: I understand...

LH: That's what Whiteman call it, he says. "The bedrock."

PC: Yeah, he's right, yeah, that is what White man calls it.

LH: Yeah.

This is a misunderstanding that my analysis shows never did get fully cleared up since the published version reads: "That must be bare rock,' he says. 'It must have come from under the water. Let's go land there and see that'" (Legros 1999, 47). In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros reminded

¹⁵ Note that I was also fooled by Tommy McGinty's pronunciation and it took Lizzie Hall's practised ear to straighten the matter.

me that, as indicated in the transcription, he had originally asked Tommy McGinty if he meant “Shrah-theh (tthi)”, which means shra = bear + theh (tthi) = rock in Northern Tutchone and that McGinty had answered “No, ground come up on it under here.” What the transcription fails to show (and never can show), however, is that according to Dr. Legros at that point Mr. McGinty made a fist with one of his hands and then gently brushed the back of his fist with the fingertips of his other hand. This, Dr. Legros understood to mime “bare”; hence the final published version “bare rock” to appear in the book. And yet, Mrs. Hall was adamant: Tommy McGinty had really said “bedrock”. This kind of ambiguity could easily be rectified by having one’s Aboriginal collaborator proofread the transcriptions, but in this case this would have been impossible since Mr. McGinty was illiterate. Even if it is true that one of McGinty’s main reasons for collaborating with the anthropologist was so that the latter would publish his nation’s founding narrative for the specific use of Northern Tutchone school children, one can’t but wonder, given his illiteracy, how fully he could have appreciated all the possible implications such a book entailed. One also wonders to what extent fully *informed* consent is possible in such circumstances.

Whatever Tommy McGinty’s understanding of books may have been, the effects of historical and social forces operating since long before he and Legros collaborated together in 1984 and 1990-91 had created a power imbalance such that whatever he may have hoped to accomplish could only be fully realised insofar as it coincided with the ethnographer’s own goals. Various institutions also had a significant effect on the various states of the text. Julie Cruikshank argues that virtually all Yukon and Alaska Aboriginal

elders tell their traditional stories to non-Aboriginals as a way of furthering their nation's land claims and self governance negotiations (1998, 138-159). Tommy McGinty, as I will show, was no exception to this general rule. The aims of his nation's government and institutions largely coincided with his own and the furtherance of them, as I will also show, strongly influenced his choice of which episodes to tell the white anthropologist, what order he told them in, and which aspects of each episode he emphasised and which he downplayed. Similarly, Dominique Legros had to work within the limiting norms of at least three separate institutions. First, that of his own academic discipline, which compelled him to impart a marked ethnographic bent to his textualizations of the crow story. Second, his English text had to be in a format such that the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation would accept it for publication in its Mercury Series. Third, his French publisher's demands, as I will demonstrate, compelled him to considerably alter the language register and style of his French translation text.

In a 1988 article Sherry Simon points out that "ethnography acknowledges that translation is an essential part of its existence and truth" (28—my translation). She argues that Translation Studies would be well advised to include ethnography's translation theories and practices in its own corpus of study. She maintains that this would offer the twin advantages of considerably expanding the scope of translation studies' objects of study far beyond its traditional focus on literary translation while affording it the opportunity to analyse the practices of a discipline whose translation starkly illuminates "the inherently conflictive and asymmetric aspect of all translation" (ibid. 33, my translation). Sensible as it may have been, her suggestion does

not appear to have been heeded until recently with such contributions as translation scholar Kate Sturge's 2007 survey of anthropological writing on translation, which, though by no means exhaustive, has nevertheless proven useful in the preparation of this thesis. Also useful were Maria Tymoczko's and Michaela Wolf's simultaneously published articles in which they both suggested questions that may be usefully asked in the analysis of ethnographic translations. Tymoczko suggests the following:

What relationship exists between two cultures at a certain point in time? Has that relationship changed over time and, if so, how has it changed? What is the position of translators in the source and/or receiving culture? What impact did a specific translation have on its receiving culture? What impact did the source and/or receiving cultural context have on the translation methods and product? How did the translation manipulate or shift the source and/or receiving culture, and how did the receiving and/or source culture manipulate the translation? What patterns of translation choices can one discern, or, to put it another way, what norms were adopted in the course of translation? How do those norms intersect with the cultural impact of the translation and with the cultural expectations within which the translation was produced? (Tymoczko 2002: 16)

Michaela Wolf's suggestions concern the power relations inherent in the production and reception of translation which are explicitly reflected in the agents' activities. Here are the questions she believes should be asked:

Who is responsible for the selection of the text to be translated? Who is responsible for their publication? Who selects the translator? What are the relations between these factors and the corresponding factors in the so-called source culture? What are the criteria for 'marking' the translated text, for instance the inclusion of a book in a certain series or the addition of a paratext to the translation? (Wolf 2002: 188)

While the thesis does not necessarily use their precise terminology, as will become clear in chapters three and four, their suggestions did indeed prove useful.

To illustrate how such questions may serve to determine what constraints operated on the agents involved in the case studied and how they affected their work, let us consider one of Maria Tymoczko's suggested

questions: "what norms were adopted in the course of the translation?" In the forward to his 1999 English publication of Tommy McGinty's story of crow, Dominique Legros writes: "Broadly speaking, the approach falls within what is known as new ethnography" (1999: 3). One presumes that this "new ethnography is practiced in contrast or in opposition to some sort of "older or more traditional ethnography," and that the norms of the "new ethnography" would have a measurable impact on Legros' textualization and translation of the story of crow, which one presumes must have been translated and textualized differently in some way or ways than it would have been had it been translated and textualized in accordance with the norms of the "older or more traditional ethnography". Inquiry into the matter has yielded a thorough recent description of the "new ethnography" by H.L. (Bud) Goodall, Jr. that appears to describe what Legros most likely had in mind when he wrote that his "approach falls within what is known as the new ethnography." Goodall writes: "By new ethnographies, I mean creative narratives shaped out of a writer's personal experiences within a culture and addressed to academic and public audiences" (2000: 9).

According to Goodall, the "traditional" and the "new" ethnographies differ primarily in their writing styles and in their authors' purpose. This is particularly important because ethno-g-r-a-p-h-y, as the root of the second half of the word implies, is first and foremost about writing. The "older" or "classic" ethnography, writes Goodall, was based on a specific model, a model of ethnographic "writing-as-speechmaking" (2000, 11). He argues that this "classic" model of ethnography reigned until postmodernism began to seriously challenge modernism's supremacy:

One of the gifts of the postmodern challenge has been the cool but sometimes chaotic dismantling of this model of representational truth telling. Postmodernists assert that the logical assumptions and scientific methods guide—some say, privilege—a particular reasoning elite’s consensual view of reality: the grand narrative (Lyotard, 1984) of Western, mostly white, mostly male, science. The problem with this construction of rationality is that there are “realities” more so than there is a “reality.” What counts as the truth depends on where you are standing when you observe or participate in it, what you believe about it in the first place, and what you want to do with it—or who is paying you to do something with it—once you name it. With representation thus challenged, the *legitimacy* of scientifically informed ethnographic reports was also fouled. “Who has the right to speak for a culture?” is very much a question about *who is entitled* to represent it (ibid. 12).

This challenge led directly to a “crisis of representation” in ethnography, a crisis that is not yet resolved, but that has nevertheless been characterized by a concerted effort by many ethnographers to try and practice a new kind of ethnographic writing based on the exact opposite of the premise advocated by traditional ethnography:

Where writing based on speechmaking prizes “winning over” an audience by defeating opponents and minimizing the importance of alternative ways of knowing, writing based on interpersonal effectiveness prizes the working out of dialectical tensions, dialogic vulnerability, and a profound openness to differences. Viewed this way, new ethnography is about how writers experiment with forms of *communication* to create meaningful relationships with readers (2000: 14).

Given that Dominique Legros insisted in both his English text and his French translation text that broadly speaking his own specific approach is that of the new ethnography, concrete manifestations of the impact of such an approach must appear in his work. The thesis therefore makes a point of identifying them and determining their overall impact upon both published works.

Most intriguing and, potentially, perhaps one of the most promising experiments of its kind attempted in the recent past occurred in 1991 in the Northern Tutchone community of Pelly Crossing when Dominique Legros persuaded Whitehorse’s Yukon College and the federal ministry of Indian Affairs to allow him to hire Northern Tutchone Elders, including Tommy

McGinty, as fully-paid instructors in a “Yukon College outreach course on Tutchone traditional laws and culture, taught on a weekly basis in Pelly Crossing by Tommy McGinty and some other elders in the band meeting hall of the Selkirk First Nation, from January to April 1991” (Legros 1999, 207). Not only were most of the sessions videotaped, but Dr. Legros has generously allowed me to make my own copies and he has moreover been willing to answer my questions on the subject. These videotapes proved particularly useful; first, they allowed me to see for myself what an outstanding storyteller Tommy McGinty truly was, and, second, because Tommy McGinty’s 1991 “lectures” largely consisted in narrating selected episodes of the story of crow, his videotaped 1991 telling can be compared to his 1984 English self-translation of the same story. In addition, these videotapes proved invaluable in determining how Tommy McGinty’s narration and narrative style differed when he performed in front of an audience of his own young people from when he narrated solely for Dominique Legros and his tape recorder.

As already stated, I hold that a rapprochement between translation studies and ethnography is long overdue. Some anthropologists, like James Clifford and George E. Marcus, maintain that ethnographic texts are a type of fiction. In the introduction to his and Marcus’ influential *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (1986), Clifford argues that ethnography is very much about writing, almost as much as literary fiction is about writing. Ethnography, he insists, is not only a science; it “is also an ‘art’” (4) and, ethnographies are moreover also fictions, albeit “true fiction” (ibid.). What Clifford does not mention—though Talal Asad does in an essay published in

the same collection (141-164)—is how much ethnographers rely upon translation to construct their “true fictions”. Indeed, it has so often been said and written that it has become a truism to say that ethnography is the translation of culture (see for example Sturge 2007, 5 and passim; Tambiah 1990, 3; Rubel and Rosman 2003, 1). Translation scholars sometimes use similar language to describe non-ethnographic translation. Sherry Simon, for example, entitled her collection of essays on the translation of Québécois literature into English in Canada, *Culture in Transit* (1995). Many translation scholars like Simon postulate an uncomfortable third, in-between, neither quite here nor quite there, cultural space that translators occupy in relation to target and source—language, culture and text—that closely parallels feminist anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod’s notion of “halfie anthropologists”, who also find themselves in an uncomfortable position, neither quite of the culture they study, nor yet any more entirely of the culture that receives their ethnographies (1991, 142). Simon’s title is a metaphor for “the in-between world of translators” (1995, 15), but as the word “transit” also implies, translated literary texts—with a few rare exceptions such as Charles Baudelaire’s translations of Edgar Allan Poe in French literature, and perhaps Burton’s *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* in English literature—also have a neither here nor there, transitory quality about them. My analysis of the various states of the text of the story of crow will demonstrate the equally transitory, neither here nor there, nature of that particular “translation of culture”.

In reality, all translation is the translation of culture. Translators—literary, ethnographic or “pragmatic”—translate words, to be sure, but what

are words if not culturally specific? And are not words themselves encoded records of culture? Are they not stand-ins for the culture that created them? Because they are so closely tied into their specific culture, the words of the other culture into which they are translated can never be entirely adequate to fully transfer all of their culture-specific meanings. This is why virtually all translations are forever stuck, as it were, "in transit", no longer of the source culture, and never truly of the target culture either. As my analysis of the translations of the story of crow will demonstrate, the constraints limiting ethnographic translation are such as to make it inevitable that such translations are no longer of the culture that produced them, nor yet ever of the culture that receives them. Mary-Louise Pratt suggests that this is because modern ethnography, "obviously lies in direct continuity with [literary travel writing], despite the disciplinary boundary by which it separates itself off from travel writing" (1986, 35). Like travel writing, ethnography has a propensity to highlight the sensational and the exotic and what makes the cultures it studies different (rather than what makes them similar) to its own (almost always) Western culture. As we will see, this will prove true for the translations produced by the McGinty/Legros collaboration as well. Ethnographies, as Clifford says, are "true fictions". How to explain his paradoxical statement? How can a piece of writing be both true and yet fiction? I believe that what he means is that though based upon true facts as reported by native informants and observed by ethnographers in the field, ethnographies are nevertheless fictions because, like cinematic montage,

they are constructed out of selected bits and pieces of information that have been spliced together to form a directed ethnographically-slanted narrative¹⁶.

It is the goal of this thesis to demonstrate how translation studies and ethnography can both gain real benefits from the insights about translation that each has attained on its own. Anthropology has yet to appreciate how much its own translation practices have in common with the kinds of translation—especially literary translation—that have hitherto been the main focus of translation scholars' reflections. Translation studies, for its part, simply cannot continue to ignore the translation practices and theories of an academic discipline that has routinely translated for well over a century and that describes its central activity as "the translation of culture." By applying some of the analytical methods developed by translation scholars to the study of its own past and present translations, ethnography stands to achieve an enhanced understanding of its own practices and their effects upon the cultures it studies as well as upon its own, by and large Western, culture. Similarly, translation studies can obtain considerable benefits from "expanding the scope of [its] objects of study far beyond its traditional focus on literary translation," as Sherry Simon argues (1988, 33). Not the least of those benefits is that the insights thus achieved can then be used to renew the discipline's traditional tools for studying non-ethnographic translation. Hence my use of the term "cross-fertilization" in the opening sentence.

¹⁶ In a recent personal communication Dr. Gavin Taylor suggested this explanation: "Perhaps the difference lies more in the subjectivity (the meaning the speaker gives to utterances). There's something of a similar divide in history. Oral historians tend to emphasize questions of 'memory' (how people recollect the past) over 'history' (a purportedly 'objective' account of the past)."

The thesis is divided into 4 chapters. Chapter 1 surveys the relevant academic literature to determine how Euro-Canadians and Euro-Americans never came to gain the trust of Aboriginals. Permission to conduct field research among many Aboriginal groups has become exceedingly difficult to obtain. Yet, until recently, it never occurred to anyone that such permissions were even needed. What has changed? How did First Nations governments and individuals become so distrustful of any and all official and semi-official representatives of the mainstream Euro-Canadian society? The chapter attempts to answer these questions and more.

To determine just who are the Northern Tutchone, where they came from (if they in fact really came from an “elsewhere”), how they lived in the past and how they live now, what is their recent history, and how they see themselves as a people, Chapter 2 draws on several available sources—not only academic, but First Nations sources as well. First, it briefly retraces the general ethnohistory of the First Nations of South and Central Yukon, from prehistoric times through first contact with Europeans right through to the beginning of the twenty-first century before focussing more specifically on the ethnohistory of the Tutchone regional band most directly implicated in the thesis, the Selkirk First Nation of Pelly Crossing and Minto. The chapter then continues in the historiographic vein with a discussion of how Aboriginal conceptions of history differ from those of non-Native historians and suggests reasons why these differences exist and how the culture of the Tutchone is informed by colonial contact and how this in turn has affected the Tutchone approach to storytelling.

Chapter 3 discusses the two states of the text that Tommy McGinty produced in collaboration with Dominique Legros. Using Mrs. Lizzie Hall's recent retranslation of his August 1984 taped Northern Tutchone language text, it highlights the differences between McGinty's Tutchone and English texts and attempts to determine why these changes occurred and which were prompted by Legros' comments and questions and which were deliberate on the storyteller's part and driven by political and other socio-cultural considerations. Several sources, including the audio and video recordings of his own discourse, are drawn upon to determine Tommy McGinty's reasons—which proved largely political—for publicly telling the crow story.

Chapter 4 describes and reflects upon the two states of the text of Tommy McGinty's story of crow as published by Dominique Legros. Though Legros' texts were largely derived from McGinty's recorded tellings, they were also partly derived from a number of formal and informal ethnographic encounters between the anthropologist and the Tutchone elder and, after Mr. McGinty's passing, from Dominique Legros' own sense of what such encounters would have been like, had they actually taken place. Just as the previous chapter did for Tommy McGinty's, this chapter reflects upon Dominique Legros' own stated reasons for publishing McGinty's crow story and describes some of the constraints that he laboured under, some of which, such as the pressures to publish, are common academic constraints, while others, such as Legros' sense of obligation towards Tommy McGinty's memory, proceed from the relationship that had developed between the two men. Legros' French translation as published in Gallimard's *l'Aube des peuples* collection is then analysed. As we will see, the Gallimard publication

imposed a whole new set of constraints on the ethnographer, not the least of which were the expectations of his Parisian publisher's representatives.

The thesis concludes with a last, largely personal look at some of the issues raised, including, but not restricted to how translation studies and ethnography might better inform each other and a discussion on what modern academic discourse and traditional Aboriginal narrative have in common.

CHAPTER 1: HOW EURO-CANADIANS AND EURO-AMERICANS FAILED TO GAIN ABORIGINALS' TRUST

When I sought the Selkirk First Nation government's permission to have Tommy McGinty's August 1984 recorded Tutchone language telling of the story of crow retranslated by a current SFN elder, I carefully followed SFN government prescribed procedure. I filled the necessary forms. I met with the relevant SFN government representatives. And yet I was unable to obtain the permission I sought. I was never told in so many words that such permission would not be forthcoming. It was more subtle than that. It came in the form of a perceptibly cooler reception when I showed up unannounced and in the increasing number of appointments not kept, allegedly because "something had come up," or because "Oh, I just plain forgot; so sorry." I eventually came to understand that for the Tutchone, it is culturally very nearly unthinkable to say "no" to someone to his face, and that the proper way to effect a refusal is through a succession of "maybe but not just yet"; "the time is not quite right"; "elders want to be consulted"; "perhaps next time we meet"; an accumulation of which is expected to be understood correctly by any reasonably intelligent individual as the polite refusal that it is meant to be. In this way I eventually understood that the permission I sought would not be granted. Fortunately, it turned out that the McGinty family was itself very much interested in obtaining an independent analysis of its patriarch's collaboration with Dominique Legros and the resulting book publications. We came to what I hope is a mutually useful agreement. They arranged for me to collaborate with Mrs. Lizzie Hall, a well-respected elder member of the family

and a recognized Tutchone language expert. In return I agreed to provide the McGinty family with a full and accurate transcription of the elder's retranslation that they may eventually use as the basis for their own publication of Tommy McGinty's story of crow. They also asked that I not publish the crow story based on the resulting retranslation but restrict myself to presenting selected short excerpts for analytical purposes in my thesis and any subsequent publications. I agreed.

In retrospect, I realize how lucky I was that the McGinty family's own interests should partly coincide with mine. I've talked with several anthropologists and all agree with my assessment: I was indeed lucky, for such permissions, at least in Yukon these days, are simply not granted. And yet, until recently, permissions were relatively easy to obtain and indeed, not so very long ago, it never even occurred to anyone that such a permission was necessary in any way. But this has changed over the last few decades and academics have been increasingly faced with Aboriginals like Odawa Cecil King, who states that as independent peoples, Aboriginals, Inuit and Métis claim the right to decide who does research on their territories, what researchers' priorities will be, as well as the right to scrutinize and veto what is ultimately published (1997, 118). What has changed? How did First Nations governments and individuals become so distrustful of any and all official and semi-official representatives of the mainstream Euro-Canadian society? Who over time among non-Aboriginals has been interested in Aboriginal cultures and narratives, and how have they viewed the Aboriginals whose cultures and narratives they are? And, over time, how have Aboriginals regarded those who came to them with a view to study their

culture and record their narratives? These are the questions that this chapter begins to answer; and it can only be a beginning, for there is no short, easy or simple answer to such questions, though one possible avenue of understanding might come from retracing the motivations of some of the participants, and this is one direction taken here. Whatever their reasons, however, one thing is clear; Aboriginal peoples did not suddenly decide that they could no longer trust representatives of the Euro-Canadian society.

THE JESUIT'S *RELATIONS DE CE QUI S'EST PASSÉ...*

The French were among the first Europeans to establish a permanent foothold in North America. And from the start, theirs was far more a commercial venture than a search for agricultural lands, though that would also come in due course. Thus Québec, Trois-Rivières, and most of all Montréal a few decades later and then Détroit, were all established where they were because theirs were ideal locations to trade with Aboriginals. And, in order to obtain the French kings' all essential approval for their ventures, the founders, from Champlain to Maisonneuve and Cadillac never failed to promise to actively promote the evangelisation of the "sauvages" (Bertrand 1935). Thus, wherever French fur traders travelled into Aboriginal country, Jesuit missionaries were never far behind (Germain 2003, 51). According to William Clements, "For practical purposes, the textualization of Native North American oral expression begins with Paul le Jeune and his colleagues, the Jesuit missionaries who arrived in New France early in the seventeenth

century" (1996, 54)¹⁷. Regardless of how one may view the Jesuits' evangelizing efforts, argues Clements, they "left a voluminous written record of their experiences that includes substantial descriptions of the Natives they encountered" (ibid. 55). He praises the Jesuits for recording a large number of translations of Aboriginal speeches and at least some "mythtelling" and a few songs, but he deplores that they seldom recorded the original words in the Aboriginals' own vernacular. He is especially praiseful of Jesuit efforts to carefully record the context in which the original oral utterances were produced. In this, states Clements, and in their general attention to content, the Jesuits were far ahead of their New England Protestant counterparts over the same period¹⁸.

It is relatively easy to understand why the Jesuits deemed it so important to translate and write about Aboriginals' speeches and stories. As William Clements argues, they needed the funding of rich European patrons to finance their evangelical enterprise, and it was therefore essential that the Aboriginals they sought to evangelise be portrayed as intelligent and eager enough to be worthwhile subjects of evangelisation, but at the same time it was important that they be made to appear sufficiently docile to actually be evangelised and that their own cosmogony be dismissed as puerile enough that it couldn't possibly compete with the Christian cosmogony that they meant to replace it with (1996, 60). As to the Aboriginals' own reasons to

¹⁷ As Dr. Gavin Taylor recently pointed out however, if one includes Mexico as part of North America, then the *Florentine Codex* predates the Jesuits' work by several decades.

¹⁸ As Dr. Taylor also reminded me recently, the Protestant missionary John Eliot's translation of the Bible into an Algonquian language was published in 1663. Translating the Bible into an Aboriginal language, however, has precisely the opposite effect of translating Aboriginal verbal productions into a European language because the aim of the Bible translator is to convert the Aboriginals to European beliefs while translating and recording Aboriginal speeches and traditional stories serves to make the Aboriginals' culture accessible to Europeans.

collaborate with the Jesuits, Bruce J. Trigger argues that they were motivated far more by commercial considerations than religious ones, given that the main inducement used by Jesuits to convert them was material, not spiritual. When they came to Québec or Trois-Rivières to trade, for example, those who were baptized were charged the same prices as Europeans, while those who were not baptized were not only charged considerably higher prices, but only those who had been baptized could purchase firearms (Trigger 1986, 254-259). But if baptism could be commercially advantageous for some, for others it could lead to ultimate disaster; here one thinks in particular of the Huron, whose military effectiveness against their Iroquois rivals was immensely weakened by the growing distrust between those who were baptised and those who were not. According to Trigger, the unity of the Huron Confederacy was all but destroyed when baptised warriors refused to fight alongside those who had refused baptism. He argues that this was one of the major reasons for the relative ease with which the Iroquois were able to obliterate the Huron Confederacy in the middle of the seventeenth century (1986, 259).

LITERATURE IN THE RAW FOR SOME—SUBJUGATION TOOL FOR OTHERS

Interest in Aboriginal narrative increased over the following century. There were now two main streams of interest; those who saw Aboriginal narrative as a sort of "inchoate literature, rich in raw material that only needed the disciplinary guidance of the civilized literary artist to take its rightful place among the world's literatures" (Clements 1992, 37), and "those

who sought to understand Native Americans for the sake of efficiently subjugating them" (ibid. 95). Perhaps foremost among the first group was Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, whose published renditions of Native American narrative into English were later reworked by Longfellow into such famous literary offerings as *The Song of Hiawatha*. Schoolcraft, who was the Indian Agent at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, U.S.A., an Ojibwa community, believed that one of the most important discoveries he had made among the Ojibwa involved their "literary propensities" (ibid. 115). In his theoretical writing Schoolcraft stressed the importance of accurate translation, though in practice he often strayed from that principle and confessed in his journal entry for 26 January 1838, "I have weeded out many vulgarisms...and it has sometimes been found necessary, to avoid incongruity, to break a legend in two, or to cut it short off" (Schoolcraft in Clements 1996, 117).

Perhaps foremost among those who sought to understand Aboriginals the better to subjugate them was Lewis Cass, the governor of Michigan Territory, who systematically studied that region's Aboriginal cultures "in order to place their governance on a sounder footing than that provided by the reports of armchair ethnologists" (Brown in Clements 1996, 95). Cass was interested in the collection of data of an anthropological nature, and if for him there was any reason to record and translate Aboriginal narrative, it was only inasmuch as it provided insights into Aboriginals' psychology that suggested ways in which they might be all the more easily subdued. Thus, Cass' motivation was not altogether very different from that of the French

Jesuits. The motives of men like Cass and Schoolcraft are clear enough¹⁹, but one wonders what could have motivated their Aboriginal collaborators. For those who collaborated with Schoolcraft, that question is easily answered, first, he was the Indian Agent and as such, a powerful man on the Sault Ste. Marie Ojibwa Reservation, and it would surely not have been prudent to refuse to collaborate with him; but most of all, he was married to Jane Johnston, the daughter of an Irish trader and a full-blooded Ojibwa, and one of his main Ojibwa sources was none other than his own mother-in-law (Clements 1996, 115). As to those who collaborated with Cass, we can only speculate that the latter would have probably offered them some sort of suitable inducement; we do know that a common practice of the time, used by both fur traders and representatives of the King or the President (and indeed by Aboriginals among themselves) was the lavish offering of gifts to those Aboriginals whose collaboration was sought (White 1991).

SCIENCE, POETRY AND MYTH

Late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth centuries, Franz Boas, the “father of American anthropology” (Tambiah, 1990, 65) and his followers undertook a systematic study of North American Aboriginal cultures. They laid down the principles of the new (new in the late 19th century, at any rate) “science” of anthropology. They were primarily interested in recording, translating and textualizing Aboriginal narratives for the data that this could

¹⁹ In a recent personal communication Dr. Gavin Taylor argued that “there was a crucial difference in the sense that the Jesuit’s motivation was essentially religious, while men such as Cass and Schoolcraft had scientific aspirations and were attached to the Enlightenment project of improving society through the accumulation of knowledge.”

yield. "Their approach to the process of textualization, which became formalized under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology and in Boasian academic anthropology, yielded a healthy commitment to accuracy in recording and transcribing the verbal component of the material they encountered" (Clements 1996, 130). For Boas and his followers, the potential difficulty of not knowing the language of their informants, far from a drawback, was seen as a golden opportunity since it allowed them to study their informants' language and their culture at one and the same time. In retrospect, however, the net effect of Boasian research methods may not have been quite as straightforwardly objective as it first appeared. Tejaswini Niranjana maintains that,

Implicitly or explicitly, ethnography always conceived of its project as one of translation (1992, 68). [...] ...the transformation of ethnology into a scientific discipline also endowed the field-worker with the professional 'tools' that would enable her/him to construct entire cosmologies on the basis of a one- or two-year acquaintance with a tribe and its language. It was often emphasized that the anthropologist need not be absolutely fluent in the language. One could always depend on native interpreters. The idea of translation in such a context is a metonymy for the desire to achieve transparent knowledge and provide for a Western audience immediacy of access to 'primitive thought' (ibid. 70).

Although there is no doubt that Boasian anthropologists have added and continue to add much to our knowledge of non-Western cultures and languages, they have nevertheless been criticised, among other things, for neglecting to account for or to convey any real sense of the "artfulness" of Aboriginal "oral performance" (see for example Hymes 1965; Berman, 1992; Clements, 1992 & 1996)—in other words, of translating mechanically, generally "word for word," and failing to translate the rhythm and the poetry of the original narrative.

While Boas and his followers were busy with the “scientific” study of Aboriginal narrative, others were publishing translations and “versions” of Aboriginal narrative and song precisely because they perceived such narratives as raw literature. It was at this time that some began to argue that Aboriginal narratives were eminently suited to serve as a basis for a new, truly American poetry in no way indebted to European traditions. Brian Swann argues that Mary Austin was the first to publish poetic “versions” of Aboriginal narrative and song in verse form by modernist, and especially imagist, poets with a view to renewing American poetry with “the resident genius of the land...this process of renewal...entailed much rewriting of collected texts by poets innocent of any Indian Language” (Swann 1994, xxv-xxvi). As Swann points out, the work of Mary Austin and other American poets started a trend that endured throughout the twentieth century. Their work leads directly to later work by Jerome Rothenberg and his *Alcheringa* collaborators and, ultimately, to Swann’s own anthologies in the U.S. and, in Canada, to such offerings as Robert Bringhurst’s controversial Haida translations.

And while Mary Austin and others reworked Aboriginal narratives into “American poetry”, Natalie Curtis was appropriating “Indian music and song” into the American canon. Curtis was a rich American who first became acquainted with Hopi music while visiting her brother who had moved to Arizona for health reasons. She was well-connected, a personal acquaintance of President Theodore Roosevelt, whose help she sought and obtained to facilitate her work with the Hopi. Though she may have been well-meaning, Curtis was not very careful in her recording of the words of

Hopi songs and her translations were often not very accurate, but this is not surprising since she was not fluent in any Native American language, let alone Hopi. Her musical notations, however, seem to have been fairly accurate—she was a trained concert pianist (Clements 1996, 179-198). According to Clements, Curtis' 1907 anthology, *The Indians' Book* was the first true example of the numerous anthologies of North American Aboriginal narrative to appear throughout the twentieth century, including such offerings as George W. Cronyn's 1918 *The Path on the Rainbow: An Anthology of Songs and Chants from the Indians of North America*; Nellie Barnes' 1925 *Indian Love Lyrics*; Margaret Astrov's 1946 *The Winged Serpent*; A. Grove Day's 1951 *The Sky Clears*; and Jerome Rothenberg's 1971 *Shaking the Pumpkin*.

To the above list should be added Brian Swann's 1994 *Coming to Light: Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America*, and his 2004 *Voices from the Four Directions: Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America*. Swann is generally critical of previous anthologies, and yet, his own also present bits and pieces of Aboriginal narrative, often modified to approximate forms of Western literary art, and although he includes his contributors' comments on the narratives that they translate, all of them fail to give any real sense of the context in which these narratives occurred. As Talal Asad has insightfully argued, "[T]he opposition between a 'contextual interpretation' and one that is not contextual is entirely spurious. Nothing has meaning 'in isolation.' The problem is always what kind of context?" (1986, 151).

Aside from those who sought to use Aboriginal narrative as the basis for a renewed American and Canadian literature, those who, like Curtis, recorded Aboriginal song and narrative were motivated, like their contemporaries the Boasians, by a genuine desire to add to the sum of Western knowledge, even if some have argued that Curtis exhibited a "benign racism" (e.g., Krupat 1992, 9), that a "rosy romanticism colored her view" (Clements 1996, 165), and that "she tended to omit such frequently notable features of Native American verbal art as vocables and repetition" (ibid. 177). It is also likely that Curtis was motivated at least in part by the desire to "salvage" what she could of Aboriginal song and narrative before it disappeared altogether. If so her motives would have been similar to those of such anthropologists of her time as Franz Boas in America and E.B. Tylor in Britain, who both advocated the practise of "salvage ethnography" before it was "too late" (see Gruber 1959, 384-5 and *passim*). Jacob Gruber argues that it was precisely this desire to salvage Aboriginal narrative from impending oblivion that shaped anthropology from its very beginning and has continued to influence it throughout its existence (ibid.). As for what might have motivated Curtis' Aboriginal collaborators, let us not forget that she was a personal acquaintance of President Roosevelt and that it was the President himself who arranged for the Department of Indian Affairs to facilitate her work (Clements 1996, 179-198). Under the circumstances, it is not unlikely that local Indian agents would have ensured that suitable Aboriginals would collaborate with her. We should moreover not discount the possibility that Curtis' Aboriginal collaborators were also anxious that their traditional songs and stories be preserved for future generations of their descendants; after all,

this is precisely what appears to have been one of the motivations that prompted Tommy McGinty to collaborate with Dominique Legros in the 1980s.

Late 19th and early 20th century ethnographers also recorded traditional Aboriginal narrative because they considered most such narratives to be “myths” and many believed that one of the tasks that anthropologists should undertake was the “scientific study of myth” (Segal 2004, 11-13). To pioneers of anthropology, E.B. Tylor and J.G. Frazer, myth was primitive science, while their contemporary, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl argued that it was magic (ibid. 14-27). According to Robert A. Segal, “Where for Tylor and Frazer myth involves the same processes of observation, inference, and generalization as science, or at least of science as [“primitives”] think of it,” argues Segal, “for Lévy-Bruhl mythic thinking is the opposite of scientific thinking. Where for Tylor and Frazer primitives *perceive* the same world as moderns but simply *conceive* of it differently, for Lévy-Bruhl primitives see and in turn conceptualize the world differently from moderns – namely, as identical with themselves” (ibid. 26). Let us keep in mind however, that the peoples whom Tylor and Frazer dubbed “primitives” never conceived of their own traditional narratives as myths; to them, these ancient narratives were (and still are) simply “true stories”.

FROM MEKEEL’S “DEGENERATED INDIANS” TO MALINOWSKI’S THEORY OF MYTH

The study of Aboriginal narrative as myth completes our list of the major approaches to the study of Aboriginal narrative up to the early twentieth century. As we will now see, the approaches already existing at the

turn of the 20th century continued through to the end of that century, albeit in somewhat evolved fashion. The followers of Franz Boas continued to record, translate and study Aboriginal narratives from various Canadian and American First Nations well into the 1930s and 1940s. In the 1930s for example, Ruth Bunzel, a Boas-trained anthropologist, retranslated Zuni narratives first recorded and translated between 1879 and 1883 by Frank Hamilton Cushing (Clements 1996, 24). Cushing had translated the narratives into Victorian verse that he sometimes “embroidered” with whole passages of his own invention (*ibid.*). Bunzel on the other hand expressed a good deal of frustration at the great difference between her source and target languages. She felt that her translations were but pale versions of the original Zuni narrative (*ibid.*). Clements argues that in their thinking Cushing and Bunzel each occupy opposite poles along what he calls an “Identity – Difference continuum”. While Cushing had felt that he could closely identify with Zuni verbal art and felt free to translate it into Victorian verse, “Bunzel was only too aware of the effect of Difference. Yet she did not represent those effects in texts” (*ibid.*). This, Clements points out, means that even if Bunzel is keenly aware of the difference between the two languages, for the readers of her translation her failure to translate in such a way as to let the difference show through allows the readers of her translations to still identify with them. Translation scholars would say that both Cushing’s and Bunzel’s translations “domesticated” the Zuni tales. Had Bunzel allowed their difference to show through her translation, then she would have “foreignized” the tales’ translation (see for example Venuti 1998, 7 and Okazaki 2003, 167).

Also in the 1930s, another ethnographer named Haviland Scudder Mekeel was doing field research on the Lakota Pine Ridge Reservation. Mekeel had already formed a precise opinion as to what was a true Indian before ever coming to Pine Ridge. But the Lakota that he met there did not conform to his expectations because some aspects of their culture showed the effects of two centuries of European contact. Instead of revising his views on what was real Indian-ness, Mekeel concluded that the Lakota Sioux living at Pine Ridge in the 1930s were not true Indians but “degenerated Indians”. Tragically, Mekeel influenced the American Government’s decision to ignore its own treaties with the Lakota when it imposed a system of government of its own choosing upon them. In any case, argued Mekeel, the treaties were not true reflections of traditional Lakota culture but mere signs of degeneration (Biolsi 1997, 133-159). It was perhaps with anthropologists like Mekeel in mind that Vine Deloria, Jr., himself of Sioux descent, argues that hordes of anthropologists invade American Indian reservations each summer, not to learn anything new, but simply to confirm what they have already learned in books that they read the previous winter (1969, 80; see also Deloria 1996).

Mekeel’s contemporary, Bronislaw Malinowski recorded, among many other things, the stories, that he called “myths”, of the Aborigines of the Trobriand Islands. Based on these stories, he formulated his own theory of myth. According to him (1954), myth as it exists in a “savage” community is not just a story told but a reality lived. It is neither fable nor fiction but a living reality believed to have happened in primeval time and continuing ever since to influence world and human destinies. Myth, according to him, is to the

"savage mind" what the Biblical story of Creation or the Redemption by Christ's sacrifice on the cross is to a fully practicing Christian. Just as Westerners' sacred stories live in Western ritual and in Western morality, and just as it governs Western conduct, so too does his own myth for the "savage." Myth says Malinowski, fulfills a vital role in "primitive culture," it vouches for the efficacy of ritual and contains practical rules for the conduct of humans; it comes into play when rite, ceremony, or a social or moral rule demands justification, warrant of antiquity, reality and sanctity. Malinowski believed that,

Primitives use magic to control the physical world. Where science stops, they turn to magic. When magic stops, primitives turn to myth – not to secure further control over the world, as Frazer would assume, but the opposite: to reconcile themselves to aspects of the world that cannot be controlled, such as natural catastrophes, illness, ageing, and death (Segal 2004, 28).

In the mid-1930s, Frederica de Laguna and Norman Reynolds were busy recording the traditional stories of the Athapaskan peoples living in the watersheds of the Tanana, Koyukuk and Yukon Rivers of Alaska (de Laguna, 1995). Then, in the 1940s, Catharine McClelland began recording what she then called "the myths" of southern Yukon Athapaskans and Inland Tlingit. Both de Laguna and McClelland worked in English rather than Aboriginal languages. By then, most Alaska and Yukon Aborigines had acquired at least a smattering of English, and though their lack of full fluency somewhat hampered their delivery, they nevertheless managed to convey some of the original artfulness and power of the stories they told. Some of the elderly storytellers interviewed by McClelland narrated in their own languages and had themselves translated by English-speaking relatives. McClelland's work with Yukon Aborigines spanned several decades, though early in her career,

she used the stories in Boasian fashion, for the data they could yield and in this sense she could be said to be a Boasian²⁰ and it was only late in her career that she came to appreciate the stories qua stories, though she would not finally publish the bulk of those that she'd recorded throughout her career until 2007 (McClelland 1975; 1987; 2007).

FROM STRUCTURALISM TO PUBLISHING "THE WORLD'S TRIBAL POETRY"

Beginning in the 1950s, Claude Lévi-Strauss (1963; 1976; 1990) was not so much concerned with defining myth as he was intent on describing and analyzing its basic structure. Strongly influenced by his friend, linguist Roman Jakobson, Lévi-Strauss theorized that like poetry, myth is language, although poetry and myth differ in that whereas the former can only be translated at the cost of losing much of its meaning, the latter preserves its mythical value even through the worst translation. Whatever our ignorance of the language or the culture where it originated, according to Lévi-Strauss a myth can still be recognized as a myth by any reader anywhere in the world. And much like a linguist can break down any utterance into its smallest meaningful components (phonemes, morphemes, sememes), a mythologist can break a myth down into its smallest meaningful components, which, according to Lévi-Strauss, are its shortest meaningful sentences that once written onto numbered index cards can then be grouped together meaningfully so as to reveal the basic structure of the myth. In the Tsimshian story of Asdiwal for example, Lévi-Strauss finds a series of pairs of opposites:

²⁰ In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros pointed out that McClelland was trained by Alfred Louis Kroeber, himself a student of Franz Boas.

high/low, tall/short, west/east, north/south, mother/daughter, heaven/earth, upstream/downstream, mountain hunting/sea hunting, etc. He argues that the Asdiwal myth serves to make acceptable to the Tsimshian the fact that they are matrilineal and prefer matrilineal cross-cousins for marriage partners while practicing patrilocal residence. This myth's function is therefore to reconcile opposites. Lévi-Strauss argues that there is no such thing as a definitive version of a myth, that every version is equally part of the overall myth, and therefore even Freud's use of the Oedipus myth in psychoanalysis is perforce an integral part of the overall Oedipus myth. Robert A. Segal comments that, "Lévi-Strauss might appear to be following Freud, but in fact he dismisses Freud's analysis as just one more version of the myth itself rather than as even an inferior analysis of it" (2004, 117). Neither Segal, nor anyone else seems to have gone the further step of applying Lévi-Strauss' own reasoning to Lévi-Strauss' own structural analysis of the Oedipus myth (or to any other of his structural analyses of myth for that matter) and dismissed it as also "just one more version of the myth itself".

In 1970, Jerome Rothenberg and Dennis Tedlock founded *Alcheringa*, proclaiming it "the first magazine of the world's tribal poetry" and cautioning that *Alcheringa* would "not be a scholarly 'journal of ethnopoetics' so much as a place where tribal poetry can appear in English translation & can act (in the oldest & newest of poetic traditions) to change men's minds & lives" (1970, 1). Two goals of the magazine were "to encourage poets to participate actively in the translation of tribal/oral poetry" and "to encourage ethnologists & linguists to do work increasingly ignored by academic publications in their fields, namely to present the tribal poetries as values in themselves rather than as

ethnographic data” (ibid.). *Alcheringa*’s influence on the textualization of translated Aboriginal narrative has been important. The three main proponents of what I term the poetizing approach to textualizing translations of Aboriginal narrative into English, Jerome Rothenberg, Dennis Tedlock and Dell Hymes were major contributors to the early issues.

Rothenberg’s 1972 anthology, *Shaking the Pumpkin*, featuring “workings” of Aboriginal songs and narratives that often appear on the page in the form of concrete poetry, and what Rothenberg calls “total translation”, by which he means the inclusion of all the vocal sounds of Aboriginal “poets”, even those that are mere sounds and have no meaning as words (Rothenberg in Ubuweb Ethnopoetics: Discourse 2007). Such an approach is particularly useful when the translator is working with sound recordings, but Rothenberg also insists that total translation seeks “to develop special means for re-creating oral works within a literate culture” (1992, 70), even for narratives such as those collected by Boas and his students, that were recorded in writing only. William Clements allows that Rothenberg’s approach has been a popular success, but he cautions that “Some students of Native American verbal art have been uncomfortable with *Shaking the Pumpkin*, especially with the ‘workings’ or versions reconstructed from previous translations” (1996, 43). Some critics charge that Rothenberg’s workings are more concerned with producing a good English poem than a truly Aboriginal one. Native American writer Leslie Marmon Silko has even accused Rothenberg of “appropriation”²¹. Clements argues that Rothenberg’s notion of total translation “may reflect more of his own primitivistic esthetic than the

²¹ (Quoted in Clements 1996, 44-5)

real artistry of the...original" (ibid. 50), but to criticize Boas for not making a similar attempt misses a fundamental point; a textualization should only reflect what was actually expressed originally: "If authentic performance did not figure into that expression, the textualization should not attempt to suggest what such a performance might have been like had the circumstances of recording been different" (ibid. 51).

Sophie McCall argues that anthologies that include Inuit songs—such as Edmund Carpenter's *Anerca* (1959), Jerome Rothenberg's *Shaking the Pumpkin* (1971), James Houston's *Songs of the Dream People* (1972), John Robert Columbo's *Poems of the Inuit* (1981), Penny Petrone's *Northern Voices* (1988), Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie's *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature (1992-1998)* —"have constructed the songs as imagist poems and isolated them from their original contexts. The presentation of the songs as isolated fragments ignores the storytelling interactions and the social contexts of the telling" (2004, 21). She condemns the re-production of Inuit culture in out of context bits and pieces, and the appropriation by Euro-Canadians (or even by southern Aboriginal Canadians such as David Daniel Moses) of Inuit Orature, which they re-present in modified form that closely approximates forms of Western literary art, or which they use as inspiration to create a Canadian literature that romanticizes the original Inuit Orature into something largely foreign to its original creators' intents (ibid. 24-5).

Brian Swann has argued that "If translation itself is problematic, the translation of Native American literatures is twice so. To questions of paraphrasis and metaphrasis, parataxis and syntactics, to epistemological,

aesthetic, and theoretical considerations, are added problems of transcription and recording, as well as moral and political dimensions" (1992, xvi). Swann's own "translations" have however also been criticised for much the same reasons as Rothenberg's have been criticised, but Swann readily allows that his offerings do not constitute true translations, but "poetic versions" of Native American verbal art that he has himself called "white man's poetry" (Swann in Krupat 1992, 14).

Beginning in 1972, Dennis Tedlock retranslated most of the same traditional Zuni narratives first recorded and translated by Frank Hamilton Cushing in the 19th century and retranslated by Ruth Bunzel in the 1930s. Tedlock normally "works with a tape recorder, and when textualizing his translation, he utilizes typography and spacing to indicate pauses, voice quality, tempo, cadence, variations in pitch, and the like (Swann 1994, xxviii). For his Zuni retranslations, however, given that Cushing had recorded them in the 19th century in written form only, Tedlock was forced to work from his personal sense of what the original tellings may have been like. About Tedlock's offerings, William Clements writes that, "While Difference in medium emerges from what amounts to typographic manipulation, Tedlock actually does little more than Bunzel to signal linguistic/cultural Difference" (1996, 27). Dell Hymes, one of the main contributors to *Alcheringa*, has argued that while most Aboriginal oral narrative was originally textualized as prose, a close study reveals that they are actually poetry and, as such, ought to be textualized as verse poetry. "Hymes investigates structures in *transcribed* texts, especially those of the Northwest cultures, employing rhetorical patterns that reveal themselves as repetitions or recurrent

adverbial particles, to produce ‘measured verse’” (Swann 1994, xxviii). Hymes’, Rothenberg’s and their numerous followers’ obsessive insistence on textualizing Aboriginal narrative in a *verse* poetry format is however puzzling. Their understanding of what constitutes “poetry” appears oddly limited to texts with formal line breaks and in which there is rather more white space than there are printed characters on the page. One can’t help but wonder if they are aware of the existence of prose poetry. It is my view that much Aboriginal verbal production—and this is most particularly so for textualizations of narrative storytelling—are most accurately represented in written form as prose devoid of formal line breaks. I moreover hold that the prose form is eminently well suited to represent the poetic aspects of such narrative without being chained by the constraints attending “the serious idea of Poetry with a capital *P*”, as Frances Mayes puts it:

Some critics maintain that the writer of prose poems didn’t take the trouble to find a form; it’s some aberration, like the fish in Florida that crawls out of water and walks.

But the short block of prose *is* the form. Line breaks aside, the prose poem keeps the craft tools of free verse working as hard as in other forms. Density can give an implosive quality to a subject; the lack of white space intensifies the impression that everything is happening at once. Some prose poems have a relaxed appearance, skipping lines or including conversation. Because of the prose appearance, the writer, at times, seems freed from the serious idea of Poetry with a capital *P* and admits more humor, conversation, description, or irony into the poem (1987, 373).

As to which Aboriginal verbal productions are best represented as verse and which as prose, Paul G. Zolbrod’s suggestions are useful:

I expand the term *poetry* to include both what is written and what is recited, and I define it more broadly to include the art whose primary medium is language whether written, spoken, or sung. For my purposes, then, I do not apply *poetry* just to *verse* as that word is conventionally understood, or to language deliberately spaced line by line on a page. Loosely speaking, what is seen on the page as *verse* represents what I call *lyric poetry*, whose language takes on properties of song, such as rhyme, fixed measures of rhythm, or other such carefully assembled patterns of sound. What appears as *prose*, on the other hand, I take as a term associated with the way print appears on a

line from margin to margin. It designates properties of the conventional voice, which I call *colloquial poetry*, in contrast with *lyric poetry*, which is sung or chanted (2004, 306).

Before settling on a verse or prose format to represent Aboriginal verbal production in written form, translators and editors might moreover be well advised to read and compare the two versions of Baudelaire's poem, "La chevelure," first composed in 1857 as a verse poem for *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1975), and recomposed in 1869 as a prose poem for *Le Spleen de Paris* (1972) under the slightly modified title of "Un hémisphère dans une chevelure." They would thus see for themselves that verse and prose are equally capable of serving as a vehicle to fully convey the full extent of any poetry. As to which form should be chosen for a given Aboriginal verbal production, it is my view that Zolbrod's reasoning—that verse be reserved for lyric poetry which is sung or chanted and prose for everything else—makes the most sense. There is however some merit in Tedlock's approach, which is not so much meant to make the text appear more poetic, as it is an attempt to give a better sense of the storyteller's delivery. There are times when in my view Tedlock-style "typographic manipulations", as William Clements calls them, are justified. I witnessed just such an occasion in 2006 at Whitehorse's annual International Yukon Storytelling Festival, where I recorded the opening words of elder Roddy Blackjack's storytelling performance:

I don't know what kind of story I'm gonna tell, but too much, too much to say. You know, this is my grandmother's story, and my grandfather's. I'm gonna use it now. They tell me story when, when we sit, sit together. Then they start to talk story until I fell asleep.

I am confident that I have recorded his words very accurately. His words are however only a small part of the overall context of that particular telling that evening under the big tent in the park by the Yukon River where

the storytelling festival took place. Many elements are missing from the above written version, one of the most significant of which is the manner of the storyteller's delivery. What the above written words fail to provide any real sense of are the number and the quality of the pauses. In Roddy Blackjack's delivery that night there was considerably more, not silence exactly, but a kind of potent, non-verbal, sonorous communication between short word groups. His pauses were much longer than his actual telling. He sat very still on a straight backed chair in front of the microphone. His hands rested on his knees. His head was bowed down and his baseball cap pushed so far down over his face that only his mouth was visible. His chest expanded and his shoulders rose noticeably every time he drew in each long breath and then shrunk and drooped as he slowly expelled it. Each word grouping was separated from the next by a long, though by no means silent, pause. These pauses were marked by his slow, rhythmic, very loud and very shrill—very close to a long drawn-out whistle—breathing. And when he spoke, it was as if in a trance. In his mind, was he perhaps reliving those long-ago evenings when his grandparents told him those stories for the first time? I like to think that what I witnessed that night was an elder reliving events going back to his early childhood and who was performing a simultaneous translation of the long-ago Northern Tutchone words of his grandparents into English for his audience.

I cannot imagine how a mere reproduction on paper of the words said by Roddy Blackjack that night could possibly do full justice to such a performance. I am convinced that only by first giving the kind of description supplied above can readers have some sense of the quality of the

storyteller's delivery. As to the words themselves, it seems to me that something akin to Tedlock's method would be appropriate in this case. Here is my attempt to better represent Mr. Blackjack's opening words:

I don't know what kind of story I'm gonna tell
but too much
too much to say

You know this is my grandmother's story
and my grandfather's

I'm gonna use it now

They tell me story when
when we sit
sit together

Then they start to talk story until I fell asleep

I have marked each of Mr. Blackjack's medium long pauses with a single line break and each of his very long pauses with a double line break. Note however that these line breaks have no poetic intent whatsoever and only serve to indicate the length of individual pauses. This would have to be clearly indicated in any publication, for to not do so would amount to misleading the readers. Although clearly not lyric poetry, and certainly not song, but straight storytelling²², Roddy Blackjack's delivery for this particular instance of telling could not possibly be more different from Tommy McGinty's delivery in all of the instances of telling that I have analysed in this thesis, and which are clearly best represented as prose without line breaks on the written page. Moreover, Roddy Blackjack's delivery that night could

²² After these words of introduction, Mr. Blackjack went on to tell two episodes of the sojee story and the story of how some animals stole the first "matches" from a selfish bear who wanted to keep them to himself, traditional stories all. The quality of his delivery remained as described throughout the performance.

not have been any more different from all of the previous performances by him that I have had access to and which in my view would also be best represented as prose with no special line breaks when written on a page.

THE HISTORIOGRAPHIC APPROACH

In the 1930s and 1940s, Canadian historian Harold Innis and his colleagues A.R.M. Lower and D.G. Creighton described the economic history of Canada as one of exploitation of the country's abundant natural resources such as fur, cod and timber, by mercantile interests based in Toronto, Montreal and London. All of these works focused upon the importance of the St. Lawrence River as the core of the Canadian economic and political system.

The resulting historiographic direction described as the 'Laurentian thesis,' became the unchallenged analytical framework for the study and understanding of Canadian history to the 1960s. This approach had significant consequences for northern Aboriginal people: they were either rendered invisible or incorporated as components of the national vision (Neufeld 2002, 23-4).

During the 1960s and 1970s, as Aboriginals in both Canada and the United States became increasingly vocal in asserting their right to self-governance and in their claiming of ancestral land rights, some historians began to describe the history of the relations between Europeans and North American Aboriginals in works that claimed to "place the Indian at the centre of their narratives". Francis Jennings, who called himself an ethnohistorian, relates how Puritan colonists from England invaded the section of eastern North American seaboard known as New England. He argues that when the Puritan colonists arrived, New England was already fully occupied by people

now generally called “Native Americans,” and not, as the works of Francis Parkman and Frederick Jackson Turner had it, an empty, virginal, wild land awaiting the axe and the plow of benevolent European settlers who, incidentally, sometimes had to civilize a few roaming bands of wild, barbarous, blood-thirsty savages in the bargain, but the dispossession of ordinary women and men agriculturalists by land-hungry religious fanatics prepared to resort to any means (including genocide) to achieve their aims (Jennings 1975).

Arthur J. Ray describes how the lifestyles of the Aboriginals who lived on the prairies west of the Great Lakes and adjacent parkland and woodland areas evolved over the two centuries between the mid-seventeenth and the late mid-nineteenth centuries. But what one sorely misses in Ray's book is the presence of real live Aboriginals. Ray's sources are Hudson's Bay Company factors' journals and correspondence, supplemented by that of their Nor'Wester counterparts. Ray affords us several glimpses into the thoughts of these European men. But, with the one much too brief exception of Chief Sweet Grass, who dictated a letter to the Bay's chief factor, we meet nary an Aboriginal person. We do get plenty of lists of the European goods and implements that Aboriginals exchanged their catches for, of the animals that they trapped, of those that they hunted for food; we get numerous maps tracing their migration pattern over time; but as to what it might have felt like to live their lives, as to what their thoughts and dreams might have been—not a single word (Ray, 1974).

Silvia Van Kirk's history of some Aboriginal women, though unfortunately entirely filtered through the eyes and feelings of the European

men with whom they lived, is based on Hudson's Bay Company journals and correspondence between 1670 and 1870 and Northwest Company officers' journals and letters, the first third of Van Kirk's book sketches the lives and times of Aboriginal women who married ("*à la façon du pays*") European fur traders who came to Rupert's Land. The middle section deals with "mixed-blood" women, the daughters of the women described in the first third of the book now become the marriageable women of choice for Hudson's Bay Company officers. Unfortunately for them, the reign of the mixed-blood wives was short-lived. Van Kirk shows how the arrival of British women who came as school teachers, pastors' wives and immigrant brides starting in the middle of the nineteenth century spelt the beginning of the end for the "many tender ties" between Hudson's Bay Company employees and Aboriginal women (Van Kirk 1980).

Eric R. Wolf is not so much concerned with the history of the Aboriginal peoples of North America as he means to show that those peoples that past historians and social scientists have long considered to be "without history" do indeed have a history. His historiographic strategy consists, first, in examining the world as it was in 1400, before Europe achieved worldwide dominance, and then trying to determine why and how this dominance was achieved. He asks the questions that he believes Karl Marx would ask if he were alive. He believes that it matters little whether Marx would in fact ask precisely those questions, all that matters is that in asking them and in conducting his research so as to find answers to them, he has been able to demonstrate that Aboriginal peoples have indeed been and still are a fully functioning, active part of world history (Wolf 1982).

According to Bruce G. Trigger, the problem with Aboriginal historiography is that "Canadian historical studies as a whole have suffered from a chronic failure of historians and anthropologists to regard native peoples as an integral part of Canadian society" (1985, 4). He does concede that it is generally accepted today that Canadian history began long before the arrival of Europeans, when the first humans set foot across the Bering Strait, but he laments the fact that the study of pre-contact Aboriginal North Americans is generally the domain of prehistoric archaeology. At best, argues Trigger, "historians still tend to study native people only in terms of their relations with Europeans during the early periods of European settlement, while studies of more recent times are left to sociologists and anthropologists" (ibid. 48-9). The importance of Bruce G. Trigger's book to North American Aboriginal historiography lies in that he has been one of the first historians to advocate telling the history of Canadian First Nations for its own sake, rather than for the sake of determining just how their presence can be shown to have affected early colonists and fur traders. Unfortunately, by ending his narrative at a point that he calls "the end of Canada's heroic age," a point which coincides with the fall of New France, he leaves himself open to the very charge that he lays at the feet of his predecessors, that is, failing to concern themselves with the history of North American Aboriginal peoples once they were no longer in a position to seriously affect the lives of Euro-Canadians and Euro-Americans.

In the 1970s, Yukon Aboriginals had not yet begun to openly question the work of social scientists. Ethnographers like Catharine McClelland, Julie Cruikshank and Dominique Legros continued to collaborate closely with various Yukon Aboriginals in relatively informal fashion. But that does not mean that Yukon Aboriginals were satisfied with the arrangements imposed upon them by the Euro-Canadian government. They were so discontented that they joined together in the Yukon Native Brotherhood and published their main grievances in a document entitled *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow: A Statement of Grievances and an Approach to Settlement by the Yukon Indian People* (1973) that also served as the basis for their land claims and self-government negotiations with the federal and territorial governments. But if many Yukon Aboriginals were still prepared to collaborate with social scientists, the seeds of doubt planted in the 1960s by Aboriginal activists such as Vine Deloria, Jr. began to take root in the 1980s as anthropologists and other social scientists gradually became aware that, "Social analysis must now grapple with the realization that its objects of analysis are also analyzing subjects who critically interrogate ethnographers—their writings, their ethics, and their politics" (Rosaldo 1989, 21).

Zeroing-in on the writing of ethnographic text, George E. Marcus maintains that "textualization is at the heart of the ethnographic enterprise, both in the field and in university settings" (1986, 264), and furthermore ethnography almost always starts as oral encounters in the field that ethnographers then textualize. Just how to do this textualization is what much ethnographic training in universities is all about since dissertations

acceptable to the ethnographic establishment must be written by anyone who wishes to be granted professional status within the discipline. It is little wonder therefore that ethnographic writing styles evolve so slowly. He argues that ethnographers should be encouraged to experiment with less conservative forms of ethnographic writing.

Quoting Walter Benjamin's "All translation is only a somewhat provisional way of coming to terms with foreignness of language," Vincent Crapanzano contends that, "Like translation, ethnography is also a somewhat provisional way of coming to terms with the foreignness of languages—of cultures and societies. The ethnographer does not, however, translate texts the way the translator does. He must first produce them" (1986, 51). This is why Talal Asad favours very source-oriented translations, even if this makes the source culture appear incoherent or nonsensical at times. To use translation as a metaphor for the description of foreign cultural practices is apt, he writes, but it has its limits because though both practices are very similar, and even though the making of ethnography does include linguistic practices, as I've already quoted him explaining in introduction²³ there are nevertheless significant differences.

In the 1980s, while some anthropologists were struggling to come to terms with the implications of their Aboriginal collaborators' growing awareness, for others, it was still very much business as usual. Mary Louise Pratt cites Marjorie Shostak's widely-known book *Nisa*, which Shostak wrote following her participant observation field work among the people whom she and her Harvard Kalahari Project colleagues call the !Kung (the better to set

²³ (Page 13)

themselves apart from the 300 years worth of travel writers and “amateur” ethnographers who have been writing about and studying the same people, otherwise, and better known, as the Bushmen). She notes that Shostak states that she wanted to study the !Kung/Bushmen because she hoped that the !Kung/Bushmen women would be able to

clarify some of the issues raised by the American women’s movement [because] their culture, unlike ours, was not being continuously disrupted by social and political factions telling them first that women were one way, then another. Although the !Kung were experiencing cultural change, it was still quite recent and subtle and had thus far left their traditional value system mostly intact. A study revealing what !Kung women’s lives were like today might reflect what their lives had been like for generations, possibly even for thousands of years” (Shostak 1981, 6—quoted in Pratt, 1986, 48).

This very closely reflects the notion of primitive, timeless, missing link peoples, or the idea of “people without history” that Eric Wolf warned against (1982), who, somehow, so believe (or used to believe) every social scientist who hoped to shed light on the ways of our remote ancestors to determine what we would naturally be like if our culture, like that of the American women whose lives Shostak hoped to enlighten through her work, “was not being continuously disrupted by social and political factions,” by studying the ways and culture of peoples who had remained “untouched by modernity,” and who couldn’t long survive in today’s bewildering world, and therefore had to be studied quickly before they disappeared forever. As Pratt points out, however,

‘Recent’ and ‘subtle’ are not the adjectives that come to mind when one ponders the grim history of the Bushman conquest. [...] Is it not worth even asking the question whether 300 years of warfare and persecution at the hands of white settlers (to say nothing of the competition with indigenous pastoralists) have had an impact on the life-ways, the consciousness, the social organization, even the physiology of the group undergoing these traumas? Did the long-term practice of massacring men and enslaving women have no impact on ‘what women’s lives were like’ or how women saw themselves? What picture of the !Kung would one draw if instead of defining them as survivors of the stone age and a delicate and complex adaptation to the Kalahari desert, one looked at them as survivors of

capitalist expansion, and a delicate and complex adaptation to three centuries of violence and intimidation? (1986, 48-49).

James Clifford maintains that ethnography is allegory, that is, it tells a story in order to teach something or to resolve a problem that is in no way directly related to the story itself or to the characters in it. In other words ethnographic writing is a parable, and a parable, almost always, in the pastoral genre. Ethnography is a hearkening back to a time or place where human relations are believed to have been more humane; it is, argues Clifford, symptomatic of a yearning for a time before the 'fall,' a yearning for Eden. And that is why ethnography has so consistently insisted on recording the stories and cultures of 'primitive' peoples, peoples without history, peoples who (ethnographers have often argued) are representative of what we were like before we were irretrievably altered by modernity (1986, 98-121). He argues that Shostak shapes *Nisa's* life experience in such a way that, "this shaped experience soon becomes a story of 'women's' existence, a story that rhymes closely with many of the experiences and issues highlighted in recent feminine thought" (1986: 104). Clifford argues that books like *Nisa* are in fact allegories "of scientific comprehension, operating at the levels both of cultural description and of a search for human origins..." and that "*Nisa* is a Western feminist allegory, part of the reinvention of the general category 'woman' in the 1970s and 80s. *Nisa* is an allegory of ethnography, of contact and comprehension" (Ibid.).

The practice of shaping written narrative, not so much in such a way as to fairly reflect one's informants' own life experiences and worldviews, as

to serve as an argument in the furtherance of the writer's own favoured cause or belief, as we will now see, is widespread.

TWISTING NARRATIVE

Lee Maracle is one of Canada's best-known Aboriginal writers. Her life's story narrative, told between 1972 and 1975 to political activists Don Barnett and Rick Sterling, was published, first, in 1975 under the pseudonym "Bobbi Lee" and later republished in Maracles' own name in 1990. It is well worth describing briefly here because of the insights it provides into the process of recording, textualizing and publishing Aboriginal life's history narratives. To quote the introduction to the 1975 edition by Rick Sterling of the LSM²⁴ Information Centre:

Early in 1972, when Bobbi was working in the LSM Information Center, several of us were preparing for work in Africa with liberation movements. As practice for doing life history documentation with African peasants, workers and guerrillas, we began recording each other's life stories. Thus I recorded Bobbi's story, realizing as we proceeded that its publication could greatly enhance our understanding of racism and the struggle of Native people. However, because of problems and contradictions in LSM and its Native members at that time, coupled with my own inexperience, it was impossible to complete the story in the same penetrating vein with which it was begun. Then, when the idea of publishing the story was seriously taken up again last year [1974], our late Information Center director, Don Barnett, re-recorded the latter years of Bobbi Lee's life and brought it up to 1975.

In her 1990 prologue to the same narrative, Lee Maracle writes:

"There are two voices in the pages of this book, mine and Donald Barnett's."

She also writes that the original Bobbi Lee narration was distilled out of a transcription about twice as long as the final published version. She recalls

²⁴ LSM stands for *Liberation Support Movement*, a Canadian West Coast more or less radical socialist-Maoist collective that, among other things, published a number of books by African left-leaning political activists. It appears to have largely ceased activities after Don Barnett's death in 1975.

having numerous arguments with the editors as to what should be included in the book and what left out. She writes that she did not always approve of the style of the book's passages, but that she eventually bowed to Don Barnett's judgement. What is particularly interesting about this publication is that not only were Barnett's and Sterling's voices hidden behind a first person narrative style designed to give the impression that the voice is Maracle's alone, but her very words were recast to reflect her editors' own agenda at the expense of her own. This, as we will see, is also typical of the recording and textualization of a great many Aboriginal life's history narratives.

Not unlike the 1975 textualization of Maracle's life's story narrative is Elizabeth Burgos-Debray's recording, translating, textualizing and publishing of Rigoberta Menchú's life's story. A member of Guatemala's Quiché First Nation, Rigoberta Menchú is active in the struggle to improve her people's lot in the face of the Guatemalan government's often brutally repressive treatment. Her primary reason for confiding her life's history to Burgos-Debray's tape recorder appears to be a bid to embarrass the Guatemalan government into easing up on its treatment of the Quiché. Menchú told her story in Spanish and Burgos-Debray had it translated into English by Anne Wright, who writes that Rigoberta Menchú speaks,

a mixture of Spanish learned from nuns and full of biblical associations... Spanish learned in the political struggle replete with revolutionary terms; and, most of all, Spanish which is heavily coloured by the linguistic constructions of her native Quiché and full of the imagery of nature and community traditions. [...] The problem of translation was how to retain the vitality, and often beautiful simplicity, of Rigoberta's words, but aim for clarity at the same time" (from "Translator's note," in Burgos-Debray, 1984: viii).

Although it is true that Menchú's language (as represented in translation) is not complex, it is nevertheless perfectly adequate to express her often

complex thoughts and descriptions. This is a very target oriented translation—meaning that it retains virtually no trace of the original Spanish. In fact, Ann Wright's translation makes Rigoberta Menchú sound like an average North American English-speaking woman with somewhat above average education—perhaps someone not unlike Anne Wright?

In the introduction to her textualization of the words of Quiché activist Rigoberta Menchú, ethnographer Elizabeth Burgos-Debray betrays a good deal of romanticism concerning Aborigines in general and Rigoberta Menchú in particular. This is the kind of anthropological writing that James Clifford warned against. Consider Burgos-Debray's assertion about Rigoberta Menchú's Quiché culture:

Within that culture, everything is determined in advance; everything that occurs in the present can be explained in terms of the past and has to be ritualized so as to be integrated into every day life, which is itself a ritual. As we listen to her voice, we have to look deep into our own souls for it awakens sensations and feelings which we, caught up as we are in an inhuman and artificial world, thought were lost for ever" (1984, xii).

A close scrutiny of Menchú's narration fails to reveal any trace of this pristine, "timeless" culture that Burgos-Debray claims to recover when she listens to Menchú's voice. In fact, Menchú comes across as a very determined woman who has no time for romantic notions of timeless pastoralism—she's far too busy describing the harshness of her environment and struggling to improve her people's lot to waste her time with such considerations.

Burgos-Debray describes the process of recording Menchú's life's story as one of interviews that she conducted by questioning her informant in the presence of a running tape recorder. Each evening she transcribed the day's tapes and formulated a series of questions meant to clarify any ambiguous points before moving on to further life episodes, these last, also

prompted by the ethnographer's predetermined questions—hardly an undirected process. And yet Burgos-Debray chose to delete all of her own considerable interventions from the final publication:

I soon reached the decision to give the manuscript the form of a monologue.... I therefore decided to delete all my questions.... I allowed her to speak and then became her instrument, her double by allowing her to make the transition from the spoken to the written word. [...] I had to insert linking passages if the manuscript was to read like a monologue.... I followed my original chronological outline, even though our conversations had not done so, so as to make the text more accessible to the reader" (1984, xx).

In other words, Burgos-Debray practiced precisely the kind of editorial intrusion that Donald Barnett and Rick Sterling practiced in *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel*—same reworking of the transcription, same choosing which parts to include and which to leave out, same appearance of pristine, exactly as told narrative, same deliberate obscuring of the social scientist's own active participation in the process and a very similar sort of subversion of the informant's narrative, in this case to reflect Burgos-Debray's own romantic notions of timeless, pristine cultures rather than the narrator's, while in *Bobbi Lee's* case, the narrative was twisted so as to reflect Barnett's and Sterling's own radical socialist agenda, rather than Maracle's particular concerns.

Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank has spent a considerable amount of time working "in the field", which in her case was the southern Yukon Territory, recording the life's histories of three elderly Aboriginal women. These, she eventually published in book form in 1990 (Cruikshank, 1990), but earlier, in 1983, she published a portion of the same narratives by these same three women in a lengthy "report" issued by The National Museums of Canada (Cruikshank, 1983). She explains that she undertook the research that led to the production and publication of her 1983 report to fulfill a

contract with the National Museums of Canada which called for her to “record, transcribe and translate Athapaskan myths of the Tagish and Tutchone in southern Yukon Territory to (i) analyse the complexity of themes in these stories, and (ii) compare these stories with versions previously collected” (1983, 1). Once in Yukon, however, Cruikshank discovered that the three elderly Aboriginal women who collaborated with her preferred to self-translate their own narratives, and they moreover all insisted in telling only those traditional stories that they wanted to tell, while further insisting that they would only tell these traditional stories as an integral part of the broader narratives of the history of their moieties, of their families, and of selected autobiographical episodes. This is however never clearly and fully stated in either the 1983 report, or the 1990 book, and only by reading both publications together can one begin to understand under what circumstances and in what form the “myths” and life’s history narratives on which both are based were recorded and edited for publication.

Cruikshank does state that these “women seemed to consider these stories an essential component of personal history” (1983, 24). And yet, in 1983 she presents all of their traditional narratives in disembodied form, amputated, as it were, from the broader narratives of which the narrators say they are integral parts. Another major theme of the 1983 report is also puzzling. Cruikshank states repeatedly (1983, 12-19) that the stories presented can be divided into two categories: those with a male protagonist, and those with a female protagonist. She further states that those with male protagonists feature vision quests in the course of which the protagonist acquires a spiritual helper with whose help he then saves his community,

while those with female protagonists feature women “stolen” against their will and taken on a journey to a parallel world from which they can only escape by performing ordinary domestic tasks exceptionally well. The problem with that assertion is that while some of the stories with female protagonists are similar to what Cruikshank describes; some of the other stories presented do not fall under her two stated categories. For example, the “Mountain Man *Shat’okâw*” story (1983, 75), and the “Wolf Man” story (ibid. 79), both feature women protagonists who go on vision quests from which they return with spiritual helpers with whose help they subsequently save their communities.

Cruikshank presents some of the same traditional stories in her 1990 book *Life Lived Like a Story*, though in verse form similar to imagist poetry, and (sort of) accompanied by the life’s histories of which they were originally an integral part. I write “sort of” because, although the traditional narratives appear next to life’s histories in *Life Lived Like a Story*, they are not actually restored to their original position in the greater life story narratives into which they had been embedded by their narrators, but placed separately, in verse form, next to selected sections of life’s history narratives, some of which, Cruikshank admits, were not necessarily those within which the tellers originally chose to tell them. And to further set the traditional stories apart from the life story narratives, Cruikshank presents the latter in prose form only, in spite of the fact that her informants had insisted they were both precisely the same and hadn’t marked either as being in any way different from the other. She also admits to having extensively edited the narratives for publication. And, just as did Burgos-Debray, Shostak, and Sterling and Barnett, Cruikshank has also removed all traces of her own, also

considerable, part in the process. Upon first reading them, Cruikshank's textualizations of Tutchone and Tagish narratives appear to provide a reasonably good representation of Tutchone and Tagish women's worldviews. A closer look, however, reveals that they are selective, fragmented and personalized versions (Cruikshank's) of those worldviews; versions that may in fact, to again quote James Clifford, be allegories "of scientific comprehension, operating at the levels both of cultural description and of a search for human origins..."; and which, like Shostak's *Nisa*, may well be more "a Western feminist allegory, part of the reinvention of the general category 'woman' in the 1970s and 80s...."(1986, 104), than a true representation of three elderly Aboriginal women's own worldviews.

A "true" representation of someone else's life and worldviews is probably not achievable, and this, in spite of the very best of good wills. Even when people are directly presenting their own views and telling their own life's story, at best they could be said to be presenting the portions of their lives and views that they are willing to make public. How much more fraught then is representation by another party, ethnographer or social activist. And yet, in spite of their considerable interventions, they often purport to provide their readers virtually unmediated access to the very words and thoughts of their Aboriginal collaborators. If the texts that they publish were the unedited conversations that actually took place between ethnographer or social activist and their informants, then readers would quickly understand that they are reading a dialogue, and not the monologue that the ethnographer or social activist has constructed out of the original conversation. In hiding their own important contributions they are misrepresenting their informants' lives and

worldviews by making their own agendas appear to be that of their (supposedly untouched by modernity) informants.

THE NATURE OF TRADITIONAL STORIES

By the 1990s some small changes had begun to take place. The anthropologists who collaborated longest with Yukon First Nations all seem to have gradually stopped using the word “myth.” Perhaps, like Dominique Legros, they believe that, “to use words like *myth* for an Other’s creation narrative is as crude, coarse and unacceptable as to address a Christian audience on the *myth* of Jesus or a faithful Jewish assembly on its *myth of Exodus*” (1999, 20—his italics). In a 1983 report to Canada’s National Museums entitled *The Stolen Women*, Julie Cruikshank explains that she had been asked to record “myths” of the Tagish and Tutchone in southern Yukon, to translate those “myths” and to compare them with previously recorded versions of the same “myths”. Twenty-five years later, Cruikshank published *The Social Life of Stories* (1998), in which she shared the insights gained over more than a quarter century of Yukon field work. Here, Cruikshank does not use the word “myth,” preferring words like “story” and “oral traditions.” She reports that Aboriginal elders tell traditional stories for a variety of reasons, including educating young people about their traditional culture and providing them with a set of rules and customs by which they may live their lives well; providing outsiders like Cruikshank with a broad “scaffolding” upon which to build their understanding of Aboriginal culture, and, finally, as a way of illuminating personal and historical events. Elder

Angela Sidney, for example, would say to Cruikshank, "Remember that story about...? Well, that's the one I'm talking about now." Sidney felt that her interlocutor could properly understand her reasoning only if she knew upon what essential philosophy it was based (see also Cruikshank 1990; 1992; 1994; 1995; 1997; 2005).

In her early publications, Catharine McClelland uses the words "story" and "myth" interchangeably (1975, 67 and *passim*). In her later *Part of the Land, Part of the Water: A History of the Yukon Indians* (1987), she no longer uses the word "myth" either. She now prefers expressions like "Indian stories" and "old time stories." She believes that "old time Indian stories" have lasted very well even in English translation, partly because of the artistry used in their retelling but also because they have such strong concepts embedded in them. She argues that we can learn a great deal about the world views of Yukon Indians from those stories, and, furthermore, that the values expressed in the old time stories still direct the lives of many Indian people today.

Traditional Aboriginal stories should however not be equated with Western traditional stories. In the Western tradition, folk stories come with a moral. The Aboriginal tradition differs markedly. Its stories almost never have an obvious moral. Individual listeners may decide what the story means for themselves, if they choose, or not. Accordingly, Elsie Mather, a Yup'ik native and educator, believes explications are best avoided:

The Yupiit know and feel that the world is experienced in different levels. There is much to wonder about. To learn to live comfortably in this is being Yup'ik. The world speaks to us, of one, in and by our feelings. It does not articulate clearly, but we make inferences and leave it at that. I feel strongly that interpretations should be very limited, leaving the information in the stories open. We are on

shaky ground when we presume to know what the message is for the Native hearers (Mather in Morrow & Schneider 1995, 27-28).

Mather is also concerned about the largely hidden neo-imperialist agenda behind some of the educational material currently being produced for Aboriginal school children:

Most often, someone else writes something in English, and then it is the so-called language specialist's job to translate it. Too often, the result is books that have very little appeal as far as language expression is concerned—to say nothing of the content. We, as translators, are, in effect, cogs in a machine—a machine used in the business of transmitting English concepts to the Natives (1995, 22).

She is well aware, however, that Aboriginals can't turn back the clock. They, just like the rest of us, are compelled to live in a world where the young no longer learn their culture directly from their elders:

We now have village libraries, and we expect our students to use these facilities. So we have to come to terms with this monster that's upon us—this dependency on books. I call it a monster because of the distance it puts between us and our sources. Nevertheless, it is a necessary monster, and we have to deal with it (ibid. 20).

In an attempt to deal with this “monster” some elders are exploring non-traditional media to renew an age-old genre. Deg Hit'an elder Belle Deacon, for example, has been retelling the old stories over the radio. Rupert James argues that when Deacon tells her stories to radio audiences, she imagines “an implied listener” (James 1995, 126) to whom she addresses her words. This is a crucial insight for, as William Schneider argues, “in oral tradition, the relationship between teller and audience guides the retelling” (Morrow & Schneider 1995, 195). Rupert James also suggests that much can be learned by comparing an English version of a traditional Aboriginal story with an earlier native language version by the same storyteller. He contends

that, “the English version may actually add to our understanding of the way the tale functions as well as our appreciation of the creativity of the storyteller” (1995, 125).

Phyllis Morrow and William Schneider admit that it took them a long time to come to the realisation that, “a story does not exist as something to be captured but as something to be passed on. As we come to understand this in the role of storytellers, it shifts our sense of ourselves as writers. We, too, are prompted to take responsibility for our retelling of stories, not simply to analyse texts in a scholarly vacuum” (1995, 2). Julie Cruikshank cautions however that, “Oral traditions are not natural products. They have social histories, and they acquire meaning in the situations in which they are used, in interactions between narrators and listeners. Meanings shift depending on how fully cultural understandings are shared by teller and listener” (1998, 40). Cruikshank illustrates her argument by describing how several Yukon and Alaska Aboriginal elders told stories at the Yukon International Storytelling Festival. All of the elders’ stories, save the one told by Jessie Scarff, were traditional stories—or “myths,” as traditionalist anthropologists would have it. Cruikshank describes how the mostly non-Aboriginal audience was shocked by Ms. Scarff’s “true” story of early to mid- twentieth century eviction of Aboriginals from the site of the Whitehorse waterfront park where the festival was now taking place. Cruikshank contends that all of the Aboriginal storytellers at the festival sought to reinforce their nation’s position in ongoing land claims negotiations, but that seems to have been lost on the non-Aboriginal part of their audience because they chose to tell traditional narratives, thereby fitting in neatly with many non-Aboriginals’ notion of “good

Indians.” Nevertheless, the obvious discomfort which most of her white audience exhibited reveals the very real impact that Ms. Scarff’s narrative was obviously having. Cruikshank links these performances, and especially Jessie Scarff’s, to Mikhail Bakhtin’s theories on orality as a subversionary political strategy against totalitarian and imperialistic governments (ibid. 149).

Ashcroft et al. argue that a shift from the oral to the written form of storytelling is a crucial step in the decolonizing process: “The seizing of the means of communication and the liberation of post-colonial writing by the appropriation of the written word become crucial features of the process of self-assertion and of the ability to reconstruct the world as an unfolding historical process” (1989, 82). Native American activist, Vine Deloria, Jr., who has definitely appropriated the written word, criticizes anthropologists because, “they have been largely spinning their wheels either emotionally or programmatically. And it’s past time when people who have that amount of influence can afford to spin their wheels” (1969, 275). He charges that, “Many theories and facts recited by scholars and scientists today are merely academic folklore which professors heard in their undergraduate days and have not examined at all” (1996, 45-6). He dismisses the ideas and theories of Claude Lévi-Strauss as mere “French intellectual nonsense” (ibid. 48). Deloria’s writings have had a real impact on anthropology, for as Thomas Biolsi and Larry J. Zimmerman argue, it is no longer possible to do anthropology quite as it was done before Deloria, and this holds true even for those who are in total disagreement with his viewpoint, if only because of the awareness that their work is now constantly under the scrutiny of their research subjects (1997, 18).

DELGAMUUKW VS. REGINA

By the 1990s, as land claims and self-government negotiations begun decades earlier threatened to drag on for perhaps several more decades, or worse, when some governments, such as that of British Columbia, refused to even negotiate in the first place, some First Nations turned to the courts. The *Delgamuukw* case is undoubtedly the most far-reaching of such endeavours to date. *Delgamuukw* refers to a 1991 judgement handed down in British Columbia Supreme Court by Chief Justice Allan McEachern, and especially to the important part of it that was later overturned by the Canadian Supreme Court. The stakes of the trial were high, involving a bid by two north-western British Columbia First Nations—the Gitksan and the Wet’suwet’en—to not only compel the Canadian federal and the British-Columbia provincial governments to officially recognise their legal ownership of over 58,000 square kilometres of BC’s north-western Interior that they were claiming as unceded ancestral lands, but that their inherent right to self-government be recognised as well. In *Delgamuukw* the evidence presented in court by the Gitksan and the Wet’suwet’en was almost entirely based upon their oral traditions that they performed in their own languages, forcing the Court to rely upon translators and interpreters. *Delgamuukw* provides considerable insight into the nature of traditional Aboriginal oral narrative, and therefore adds much to our understanding of what those narratives mean to at least some Aboriginal societies. For a detailed, almost “blow-by-blow” description of the trial, Culhane 1998, is an excellent starting point (see also Culhane 1992;

Cruikshank 1992, 1994; Yagalahl 1992). That B.C. Supreme Court Chief Justice McEachern rejected the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en arguments outright, according to Yagalahl of the Gitksan nation, was a direct result of those nations' histories having been transmitted orally: "And I guess this is one of the arguments that was [sic] used against us, that there's oral history and nothing is written. I guess it's fine if anthropologists get this history and write it down and then it can be recognized" (1992: 9). Speaking in 1992, long before the Supreme Court of Canada overturned part of the McEachern decision, Yagalahl was still understandably bitter over this rejection of her people's legal system by the Canadian State as personified by the Chief Justice. And even if the McEachern decision was eventually overturned on appeal by the Supreme Court of Canada, the highest court's ruling did not by any means settle the question of Aboriginal land claims or that of Aboriginal self government in Canada. It ruled, first, that the land entitlement issue had been marred by procedural defects and therefore it ordered a new trial and, second, that a new trial was needed in any case,

"so that the Aboriginal perspective on their practises, customs and traditions and on their relationship with the land, are given due weight by the courts. In practical terms, this requires the courts to come to terms with the oral histories of Aboriginal societies, which, for many Aboriginal nations, are the only record of their past ... [and which] play a crucial role in the litigation of Aboriginal rights (par. 84)" (Hurley 1998).

In other words, the Supreme Court of Canada advises that a new trial is needed to determine the merits of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en land claims. And at this new trial, the Supreme Court expects lower courts to make special allowances for and not to act prejudicially toward those nations because their historical records exist only in oral form. This amounts to the Canadian State's official recognition of the Gitksan's and Wet'suwet'en's oral

traditions, and, by implication, the oral traditions of all Canadian Aboriginal Nations as well. As legal precedent, the Delgamuukw decision has had and will continue to have far reaching consequences in virtually all Aboriginal/Governments litigation. Notwithstanding, Sophie McCall argues that if the Supreme Court eventually accorded Aboriginal oral traditions and Aboriginal traditional legal systems a measure of recognition in the Delgamuukw case, this is greatly mitigated by the same court's statement that industrial development should be accorded priority over Aboriginal land rights and that the expropriation of Aboriginal territory for development purposes should be allowed (2003, 325), a clear indication of who in Canada, between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginal commercial interests, wields the ultimate power.

RECENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

In the 1990s historians continued to describe the history of the relations between North American First Nations and Europeans. Though relying exclusively upon non-Aboriginal sources, many attempted to place Aboriginals squarely at the centre of their narratives. Richard White, for example, covers the stretch of North American history that saw the relations between Europeans and Aboriginals come full circle, from each group regarding its counterpart "as alien, as other, as virtually nonhuman;" through the construction of a "common mutually comprehensible world in the region of the Great Lakes the French called the *pays d'en haut*," and back to "the breakdown of accommodation and common meanings and the recreation of

the Indians as alien, as exotic, as other”(1991, ix-x). White describes events taking place more than two centuries ago. It may therefore be of limited use for him to consult Aboriginal traditions in the hope of obtaining a more balanced view of the events he describes than the unavoidably euro-centered one he was able to obtain from his exclusively non-Aboriginal sources.

Kenneth Coates (1993), describing recent events, many of whose participants, or their immediate descendants are still alive today, however, could have sought the input of the Aboriginal participants in the events he narrates. As Coates tells it, the tale of the relations between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in the Yukon from the gold rush onward is a sad one of mistreatment of the men and women by bootleggers and unscrupulous white employers, and the exploitation of the entire Aboriginal population by the missionaries. In this, the missionaries were aided and abetted by the Canadian government, which appears to have been interested most of all in promoting large scale mineral resource exploitation and to have been content letting missionaries deal with Aboriginals, provided it cost as little money as possible. As Coates points out:

To the DIA, the Natives' continued prosperity [through their traditional hunting – gathering lifestyle] and mobility obviated the need to alter social and economic patterns through a sustained educational effort, just as providing industrial skills was unsuited to likely future prospects in the territory. Extensive education raised false expectations, provided unmarketable skills, and cost the government a considerable amount of money. The willingness to leave the natives uneducated, in the colonial sense of that term, lasted until the late 1940s, when a major shift in federal programming led to more universal schooling (1993, 139).

These *laissez faire* government policies' net effect was to preserve most Yukon Aboriginals' traditional lifestyles largely intact well into the 1950s and

even beyond, as Dominique Legros (2007a) has recently shown. The one glaring omission in Coates' "history of Native-White relations in the Yukon Territory 1840-1973", however, is first-hand Aboriginal testimony. Coates went to the effort of corresponding with a retired Department of Indian Affairs agent in Yukon during the 1950s that he quotes a few times in his book. One is therefore at a loss trying to explain why he never interviewed any of the numerous elders and official spokespeople of the various Yukon nations, all of whom lived this history first hand and whose input would surely shed considerable light and afford us valuable new insights on the events described.

Other historians are beginning to appreciate the true value of Aboriginal historical narrative. Noting that virtually all "of the literature concerning the Inuvialuit who lived on the Yukon North Slope has been written by non-Inuvialuit anthropologists, archaeologists and historians trying to reconstruct the history of these people" and that "little attention, however, has been given to the knowledge of the Inuvialuit," Murielle Ida Nagy illustrates how much can be learned (and erroneous scientific estimates corrected) from the Inuvialuit with the following telling anecdote by Tuktoyaktuk elder Jimmy Jacobson:

About 15 years ago, maybe 10 years, I went back to Herschel Island with a chopper. When I went to Herschel Island with a chopper, I went and looked at that place where I was raised, in that sod house. I was looking for it and I found it near Kunalik's old house. I was standing on that old sod house thinking way back what I used to do when I was a kid and grass was real long and while I was standing on top that sod house, one white man come.

He asked me who I was, I told him my name was Jimmy Jacobson and he said he was a scientist. So that scientist told me while I was standing on top there, he said, "Jimmy, you know where you're standing?"

I said, "Yes."

"Over 400 years ago," he said, "Eskimos have been living where you're standing."

I told him, "No, it's less than 50 years ago, because I was the one raised on it, I used to live in that sod house."

So I figured, well, he's not very much of a scientist when he says 400 years! (1994 vii).

In an effort to correct what he perceives as the basic flaw of virtually all Euro-American and Euro-Canadian historical narratives purporting to narrate the history of North American Aboriginal Nations from the indigenous point of view, despite the fact that they rely almost exclusively on non-Aboriginal written sources and accord little or no credence to essentially oral Aboriginal traditional sources, Huron-Wendat historian Georges E. Sioui proposes a truly Aboriginal take on Aboriginal history. In his 1999 *Pour une histoire amérindienne de l'Amérique*, for example, Sioui draws on both written European sources and traditional Aboriginal sources to refute the thesis according to which the Iroquois federation destroyed the Huron Confederacy to get rid of economic rivals in the fur trade. He argues that the real Iroquois motives were twofold; one, their numbers having been considerably reduced, primarily by European diseases, they wanted to adopt their fellow Iroquoians, the Huron-Wendat in replacement, whether they were willing or not, and, two, they believed that the Huron-Wendat had become much too closely allied with the French and their Jesuit missionaries and it was therefore in the Huron's own best interest that they made war on them with the ultimate aim, not of killing them, but of taking them prisoners and adopting them away from negative white influences (1999, 55-82). Sioui advocates a new/old historiography based on traditional Aboriginal values in general and the Aboriginal philosophy of the "Sacred Circle of Life" in particular, according to which all life is sacred and everyone, non-Aboriginal as well as Aboriginal, is welcome to join the circle (ibid. 3-6). Sioui describes his historiography as

"autohistoire amérindienne" (Aboriginal self-history) (ibid. 3). An autohistoire amérindienne is necessary, he argues, because mainstream historians have systematically distorted the history of First Nations so as to make them responsible for the ills visited upon them by their white invaders (ibid. 10 & passim).

Canadian novelist and philosopher, John Ralston Saul, argues:

Whatever our [i.e. the Canadian] family tree may look like, our institutions and common sense as a civilization are more Aboriginal than European or African or Asian, even though we have created elaborate theatrical screens of language, reference and mythology to misrepresent ourselves to ourselves (2008, 3).

What makes Canada work so well where most other countries have failed, contends Saul, is precisely where we have applied the traditional Aboriginal philosophy of the all-inclusive Aboriginal sacred circle of life:

On the single issue of immigration and citizenship diversity, we seem unable to notice the obvious—that it is a non-racial idea of civilization, and non-linear, even non-rational. It is based on the idea of an inclusive circle that expands and gradually adapts as new people join in. This is not a Western or European concept. It comes straight from Aboriginal culture (ibid. 4).

Sioui's arguments certainly have merit, though some sections of his book sometimes seem heavy on argumentation and light on concrete details. One looks forward to further and more elaborate work by the same author. As to Saul's theory of Canada based on Aboriginal philosophy, and especially the Aboriginal idea of the all welcoming all inclusive circle, would this not be a far more suitable metaphor for Canada than the current so-called "cultural mosaic"?

David Neufeld and Frank Norris remind us that one of the most significant historical aspects of the Chilkoote, White and Chilkat passes is that for centuries before the arrival of Europeans they served as trading routes for

coastal Alaskan Aboriginals and their interior Yukon counterparts, or, more precisely, between the Chilkoot and Chilkat Tlingits and the several Athapaskan nations, including the Tutchone, who lived along the Yukon River and its tributaries. And during the Gold Rush, a great many Yukon Aboriginals, men and women, hired out as packers along the trail over the Chilkoot Pass for the prospectors who followed that route to the headwaters of the Yukon River and thence, through Tutchone territory, by boat to Dawson. At the same time, many Aboriginals also earned money as hunters who sold meat to the hordes of non-Aboriginals making their way to the gold fields (Neufeld & Norris, 1996).

Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank was one of the first Academics to fully credit southern Yukon elders' traditional take on their history. In a 1994 article she explains that Aboriginals are now "demanding that their oral traditions be taken seriously as legitimate perspectives on history" (1994a, 403). She contends that mainstream historians who question the reliability of Aboriginal oral histories on grounds that they are apt to change over time are deliberately ignoring the fact that even good Western histories last little more than ten to fifteen years after which, they too are reinterpreted. She concludes that the contradictions in what constitutes history—oral and written—cannot be resolved. "The narratives can be juxtaposed," she writes, "but not necessarily reconciled into a seamless whole" (ibid. 410).

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s anthropology was in constant turmoil as increasing numbers of anthropologists argued for a renewal of the discipline's basic premises. H.L. (Bud) Goodall, Jr. contends that for much of the twentieth century the bulk of ethnographic writing amounted to "speechmaking in book form":

This model for ethnographic writing-as-speechmaking and for modern argument in scholarly texts in general, is predicated on the presumption of a reality external to the perceiver, whose particulars may be known through the application of scientific reasoning (2000, 11).

Goodall maintains that postmodernists have largely succeeded in dismantling this model of representational truth telling by demonstrating that what is considered the truth depends largely upon "where you are standing when you observe or participate in it, what you believe about it in the first place, and what you want to do with it—once you name it" (2000, 12). If truth is subjective, reasoned postmodernists, then so too must be scientifically informed discourse in general and ethnographic reports in particular. This, in turn, led to the "crisis of representation" (ibid.). According to Goodall, this is where the "new ethnography" comes to the rescue, for if the re-presentation of a given culture is necessarily always mediated by the sensibilities, social background, gender, ethnic origins, etc. of those doing the re-presenting, then ethnographers must write subjectively, meaning that they must reveal their biases while making it clear that what they describe or re-present in their ethnographies are mere versions and that other witnesses' versions would necessarily differ. This, writes Goodall, "opens the academic door to alternative forms of representing lived experience. Impressionist tales—fiction, drama, poetry, dance, personal letters, film, and even Internet-based

hypertext—written from appropriated forms for new scholarly expression, vie for scholarly attention, and publication space” (ibid. 77).

Anthropologist Catharine McClelland, who began recording traditional narratives among Southern Yukon Aboriginals more than half a century ago, has only recently published those narratives. McClelland confesses to having standardized her collaborators’ English in the textualization process: “I decided to alter the verbatim notes or recordings just enough to put them into a basic English that represents my best efforts to write grammatically, but to stray as little as possible from the original text” (2007, 8). She admits to long delaying publishing the bulk of the Aboriginal narratives she’d collected in the hope of eventually achieving “an ultimate interpretation of the entire corpus.” She came to understand, however, that “No matter how dazzling any such analysis might be, it could never encompass all the qualities of the overt and covert aspects of this ongoing expressive art” (ibid. 1). No one questions McClelland’s intentions when thus standardizing her informants’ English before publishing their words, but its overall effect is nonetheless a negation of the narrators’ bid to appropriate their colonizers’ language for their own purposes. Julie Cruikshank has also spent a considerable amount of time working “in the field”, which in her particular case was also southern Yukon, recording the life histories of elderly Aboriginal women. Cruikshank admits to having extensively edited their narratives for publication. Of one of the narrators, for example, she writes: “I have chosen to edit her account more than the others—not by changing her words, but by rearranging them to meet the grammatical demands of English when such reorganization seems to make her meaning clearer” (1990, 268). And, just as did Burgos-Debray,

McClelland and Sterling and Barnett, Cruikshank also removed all traces of her own, also considerable, involvement in the process. This practise is so widespread that in the textualization of Aboriginal narrative, it is the norm, not the exception.

Responding with norms of their own choosing, some Aboriginals have experimented with novel forms of translation and textualization. Walter D. Mignolo and Freya Schiwy (2005) describe Mexico's Subcomandant Marcos' theory of "double translation." When he and his fellow Zapatistas translate source texts in any one of four Aboriginal languages into Spanish, they habitually use Aboriginal grammar and idiom in their target texts. The result can be so ungrammatical as to appear nonsensical to a Spanish-speaking reader unfamiliar with the grammar of the Aboriginal languages. Marcos and his Aboriginal collaborators call this "mestizaje". Mignolo and Schiwy argue that Mexican Aboriginals thus turn the tables on their Spanish-speaking colonizers who themselves once used (and sometimes still use) translation as a potent colonizing tool. The type of translation that Marcos and the Zapatistas advocate might however be more properly termed *political statement*, rather than straightforward interlingual translation.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL TRANSLATION

Anthropologist-translators, contends Tullio Maranhão, have been taking the easy way out and have translated by rendering words and expressions or concepts of the source culture by what they deemed to be the closest equivalent word, expression, or concept in the target culture. At best,

he argues, these translations are highly ethnocentric and at worse no translation at all but outright fiction, since they make readers believe that the other culture is not so very different from their own by making its cosmology appear not so very dissimilar after all, or, alternatively, distorts the reality of the other culture by making it more sensationally exotic. Thus a word like cannibalism, which, according to Maranhão, who has studied South American cultures extensively, is derived from South American Aboriginal cultures, is mistakenly believed to refer to the practice of eating human flesh, when in fact, to those peoples cannibalism refers not only to eating human flesh, but to eating all animal flesh and the flesh of all plants as well and describes the horror that all humans of those cultures feel at having to destroy any living entity (plant, animal or human) in order to live (2003, 71).

Akira Okazaki argues for a resolutely foreignizing translation in ethnography. He points out that many societies, including the Gamk and several other African societies do not believe in familiar Cartesian Western dichotomies such as body/self, dream/reality, mind/body, and so on. To the Gamk, as to several other African human populations, the self is inconceivable as a separate entity from the body, and to dream is not an action which one performs. The Gamk have no verb "to dream," only a noun, "dream." They say, "A dream ate me," which Okazaki argues must never be translated "I dreamt," but, if not word for word, at least with a passive sentence such as "I was visited by a dream," so as to accurately reflect the Gamk notion of people being recipient of dreams that come from external agents. He writes that instead of making another culture seem strange or exotic, ethnographic translation ought, "to make a reader (and what he or she

takes for granted) stranger than others or, to use Venuti's words, 'to send the reader abroad.' In other words, it is necessary to make a reader admit *Je est un autre*, as Rimbaud said, in order to undermine his or her cultural narcissism" (2003, 167).

POETIZING TRANSLATION

While some ethnographic translators are striving to send their readers abroad, other translators of Aboriginal narrative continue to follow the long-established tradition begun nearly a century ago by Mary Austin and Nathalie Curtis. Virtually all of the contributors to Brian Swann's most recent anthology of translated Aboriginal narrative admit to having struggled with how best to represent their translations on the page. Most of them followed either Hymes' or Tedlock's strategy, though a handful did not because they fundamentally disagree with such strategies, deeming them too artificial. Catherine A. Callaghan argues for example, that although representations in verse might "be a valid heuristic device [...] it serves little purpose to cast English translations into corresponding lines, especially in cases where they read more like prose than poetry and the original is not included" (2004, 229).

The wide-ranging influence of Tedlock's and Hymes' approach can sometimes have unexpectedly negative effects. Ellen B. Basso reports that her early attempts at translating Kalapalo narratives resulted in "quite literal translations into English," but later, she tried to "follow the practice of ethnographers who were beginning to apply some of the ideas of Dennis Tedlock and Dell Hymes in their search for formal poetic structures in oral

texts,” but “these translation practices can make the stories turgid and difficult to read” (2003, 95-96). To compensate, Basso changed both the form of the narrative and the person of the narrator from third to first person, eliminated all repetitions and replaced “uninteresting” words and phrases with others that she deemed more in keeping with Western readers’ expectations. And so Basso, apparently unaware of the ethical questions her actions might raise, admits to practicing the very form of translation that ethnography’s critiques so often decry.

As the poetics theories of Rothenberg, Tedlock, Hymes and others gained widespread acceptance, Julie Cruikshank was also prompted to begin experimenting with poetic form. In her *Life Lived Like a Story* (1990) for example, she gives her informants’ traditional narratives the appearance of verse poetry. When they talk about events occurring in their own lifetimes, she textualizes their words as prose. In her explanatory notes to a textualization of a story by Angela Sidney, Cruikshank states that “In converting her spoken words to text, I have followed Dell Hymes, Dennis Tedlock and others, breaking the lines to correspond with a pause or breath and leaving a line space to indicate a longer pause. This seems to reproduce the ‘sound’ of Mrs. Sidney’s voice more accurately than does conventional paragraphing” (1994b, 138). If Cruikshank’s use of line breaks is solely meant to best reproduce the sound of the narrator’s voice, however, then one is at a loss to explain why she chose to only give the traditional stories line breaks, but not the non-traditional stories, especially since she herself states that her collaborators treated both types of stories indifferently and tended to weave in and out of either type without any sort of pre-warning, and indeed

that they insisted that they were the same and that they could not be separated from each other. The fact that Cruikshank made them appear differently on the page therefore suggests that it was Cruikshank's own personal sense of a difference between traditional and non-traditional stories, and not that of her informants, that made her partially adopt Tedlock' and Hymes' methods.

Canadian poet and translator, Robert Bringhurst published several retranslations of classical Haida stories that were originally recorded, translated and textualized as prose by Franz Boas' student, John Swanton. Bringhurst candidly acknowledges his indebtedness to Dell Hymes. "My differences from Hymes, I like to think, are superficial" (1999, 15). In spite of their popularity, Bringhurst's publications of "Haida Poetry" have attracted negative criticism. Nicholas Bradley argues that Bringhurst's translation strategy renders "the English-language poetry forever open to questions of authenticity and accuracy" (2004, 145). Bringhurst's Haida "translations" might be more accurately termed English-language poetic adaptations since he is actually re-translating a turn of the twentieth-century translation by anthropologist and linguist John Swanton in close collaboration with a bilingual Haida man called Henry Moody. A comparison between Swanton's and Bringhurst's target texts reveals few appreciable differences between them other than the most obvious ones that Swanton's appears on the page as prose and Bringhurst's as verse poetry and that Bringhurst also occasionally adds words and phrases that have no counterpart in the original but that he deems needed to properly demonstrate just how poetic the original Haida is (Bringhurst 1999, 55). Bradley shows that Bringhurst is

inconsistent in his translation of place names, sometimes using the modern Euro-Canadian name, sometimes the original Haida name, and sometimes inventing a new “poetic” name for the same place. Bradley speculates that, “the variation, or lack of consistency, is evident and likely strategic” (ibid. 151). He notes a similar inconsistency in the rendering of characters’ names. He concludes that, “vital to Bringhurst’s conception of cultural exchange is the understanding that a given culture can share the artistic products of another culture” (ibid. 161).

Glenn Willmott argues that Bringhurst’s Haida translations “constitute a commodification for commercial purposes of appropriated Aboriginal traditional narrative” (2004, 125). His case against Bringhurst rests largely on the fact that “Bringhurst’s work, published by a mainstream national press, is emphatically designed to appropriate Haida stories into a Western art canon and the value-laden sense given by modern artistic specialization” (ibid.). Referring to a retranslation of a portion of the same Swanton text by linguist John Enrico (1995), Willmott writes,

Enrico’s work, however, published by a not-for-profit, local press (The Queen Charlotte Islands Museum), points like other works I have discussed, yet even more directly, to the closure of its narratives beyond their own medium, beyond the written word and the page. This beyond, according to the preface [to Enrico’s translation] (vii-viii), is the particular fabric of feelings and values associated with the region, a fabric that writes the Haida community, specially in the medium of Haida language. The stories are presented fully in Haida and English on facing pages and clearly may be used by an English-speaking reader learning to understand written (and, with the orthography appendix, also spoken) Haida.” (125-6)

Willmott is of course correct in stating that Bringhurst’s translation “is emphatically designed to appropriate Haida stories into a Western art canon,” but he omits to mention that Bringhurst also presents Haida text and its translation side by side, though he only presents part of his translation in that

form. And his argument that an English-speaking reader could learn Classical Skidegate Haida on the basis of Enrico's side by side (though far from word for word) translation would be merely laughable if it weren't so naively (and ethnocentrically) ignorant of the complexities of learning as sophisticated a language as Classical Haida.

APPROPRIATING WESTERN MODES OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION

While Ashcroft et al. merely advocate that Aboriginals appropriate the written word, some Aboriginals have already gone further and appropriated not only the written word but the silver screen as well. Inuit filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk's award-winning film, *Atanarjuat, the Fast Runner*, uses carefully controlled "partial-translation" to address fellow Aboriginals and the non-Aboriginal public at large on different levels at the same time. *Atanarjuat* appeared on screens all over the world in its original Inuktitut with subtitles in the language of the local audience. This subtitling strategy, according to Sophie McCall, was not an innocent choice on the part of the Inuit filmmaker, whose "politics of partial translation" are a deliberate attempt at keeping ultimate control over traditional Inuit narrative in Inuit hands. The first part of the title of McCall's 2004 article ("I Can Only Sing This Song to Someone Who Understands It") is from the opening scene of Igloolik Isuma Production's now famous film in which a character (Kumaglak) refuses to sing his song for a mysterious stranger on grounds that the stranger would not understand it. "Kumaglak will not sing because he doesn't know how the listener will receive, retell, and reuse the song for his own purposes. His

suspicions prove well-founded: the 'up-north stranger' murders him..." (2004,19). McCall argues that this scene, which opens the film, and especially the statement by Kumaglak is a metaphor of the way that Euro-Canadians have plundered Inuit art, stories and songs and appropriated them for their own use with little regard for what they might have meant to those who created them. A film such as *Atanarjuat*, she argues, serves to re-appropriate their own culture for Inuit artists. Furthermore:

The subtitled film enables the filmmakers to create two parallel texts that interact and speak to each other in complex and imperfect ways. The gap between what is spoken and what appears on the bottom of the screen can be manipulated strategically, for a variety of effects, enabling the filmmakers to address different audiences. The book version of *Atanarjuat*, by Paul Apak Angirlik and others, which includes screenplays in both languages (Inuktitut and English), film stills, interviews, personal essays, and ethnographic commentary, adds still more layered and variant tellings to the oral script. The film's strategy of partial translation highlights the space of cultural contact and difference in acts of textualizing orature and orality. The filmmakers thus resist the powerful explanatory impetus of the genre of the ethnographic film, which presumes to elucidate the roles and purposes of cultural practices for outsiders (ibid. 26-7).

Sophie McCall proposes a complete reversal of the current process of recording, transcribing, translating, textualizing and publishing Aboriginal narrative. Since the influence of the narrative's recorder, transcriber, translator, editor, publisher can never be eliminated entirely, she argues, the next best thing would be to make it entirely transparent. This means that each and every action of all participants would be clearly laid out in the final publication. At the very least, it would mean including all of the interviewer's questions, interventions and promptings during the recording process, as well as a candid and thorough description of any and all manipulations that the informants' words have undergone throughout the process. McCall argues that "Bakhtin's discussion of how 'heteroglossia' emerges from rigidly hierarchical social relations is particularly relevant..." (2002: 75). A fully

transparent publication of Aboriginal narratives would then clearly show that their production was a dialogic process, and not the purported monologues they are made to appear.

McCall's suggestions are good ones, and there is little doubt that many ethnographers are now prepared to put them into practice. In Yukon at this time, however, not only are Aboriginals loathe to trust them in their new found resolve, but the very fact that the McGinty family is seriously considering publishing its own version of its patriarch's telling of the crow cycle of stories suggests that it may now be ready to appropriate the written word.

CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORY OF YUKON ABORIGINALS AND THE STORIES OF TOMMY MCGINTY

Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank argues that Yukon Aboriginals tell stories for a variety of reasons, from educating their young about their nation's traditional culture and providing them with a set of rules and customs to follow throughout their lives, to illuminating personal and national historical events (1990, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1997, 2007, *passim*). This chapter is concerned with the second reason, i.e., illuminating historical events, or the telling of traditional stories as a way of thinking about history. In the traditional Aboriginal worldview, history, or the relating of historical events cannot be dissociated from—would be patently absurd in the absence of—the traditional stories that give it meaning. Catharine McClelland contends that we can learn a great deal about the world views of Yukon Indians from their traditional stories: "The more the reader or the listener thinks about them, the better he can understand how important and dramatic these stories are. He can learn a great deal from them about the traditional Indian worldview. The values expressed in the old time stories still direct the lives of many Indian people today" (1987, 251). Simply put, Aboriginal traditional stories contain the wisdom accumulated by the nation over the millennia.

When Julie Cruikshank asked Yukon Aboriginal women to talk about such historical events such as the Klondike Gold Rush or the construction of the Alaska Highway, she was taken aback when instead they all chose to tell her seemingly unrelated traditional stories. It was only much later that she came to understand that her informants believed that it would be utterly useless to tell her about events if they didn't first provide her with a solid

grounding in the Aboriginal worldview and philosophy that she would need to make sense of those events. When Aboriginal elders tell their nation's traditional stories, they are also narrating their people's history as well as an "essential component" of their personal history, as Cruikshank reports (1983, 24). And this is why, as we shall see, today's elders often embed seemingly anachronistic events such as the coming of white missionaries with their tales of a man-god named Jesus who was born of a virgin named Mary and modern inventions such as outboard motors into traditional stories about the beginning of time and how things came to be the way they are now.

IN THE BEGINNING

There is no consensus about how long humans have been living in Yukon, when they got there and where they came from. There may never be. There are two main official explanations, each of which makes perfect sense within the parameters of its own particular system of belief—the scientific explanation and the Aboriginal explanation. Unfortunately, the two cannot be reconciled.

Most scientists hold that the human species saw its beginning somewhere in Africa and that the descendants of the first hominids, migrating over millennia, from one valley to the next, from one climate zone to another, over mountains and across waters, in due course succeeded in colonizing all of the Earth's continents save Antarctica. One of the major implications of this theory is that all of the inhabitants of all the continents except Africa originally came from somewhere else. But when it comes to explaining how,

when and where the first people came to the Americas, even scientists can't agree. There are several hypotheses, none "proven" scientifically, though all are based upon fairly convincing archaeological evidence. The hypothesis that scientists most generally favour, however, is the one according to which the ancestors of today's Aboriginal Yukonners came from Siberia over a "land bridge", some time during the last ice age. The word "bridge" is however misleading because it denotes a long narrow passageway across a body of water, when in fact, during lengthy periods of time, because so much of the oceans' water was frozen into kilometres-thick glaciers, world sea levels had dropped "by as much as 125 meters" (Yukon Beringia Centre website). This means that a broad swath of the shallow sea between Siberia and North America was no longer under water. It had become grassy tundra and "supported an astonishing variety of life" (ibid.). Scientists call the resulting sub-continent "Beringia" (e.g., Danvill 2002, 46).

If the ancestors of today's Yukon Aboriginals did indeed cross from Asia to North America by migrating over these grassy steppes, they would have been entirely unaware of it. These hunter-gatherers would have been simply availing themselves of the opportunities afforded by an abundance of game animals ranging over these steppes. As to when this would have occurred precisely, no one knows for sure, except that it would have to have taken place during one of the several periods when world sea levels were sufficiently low for Beringia to be above sea level (Applied history research group of the University of Alberta/Red Deer College Website 2007; Danvill 2002, 46). In other words, it may very well have happened some time between either 40 000 and 25 000 years ago, or between 24 000 and 14 000

years ago (Jordan 2007; Danville 2002), because those were the only (relatively) recent time periods during which the portion of Beringia now known as the Bering Strait was not flooded.

Interestingly, archaeological evidence unearthed in Yukon suggests convincingly that there were indeed people occupying at least parts of present day Yukon during both of those periods. Mammoth bones, bearing signs of butchering by humans, that were found in the Old Crow Basin have been radiocarbon dated at between 25 000 and 40 000 years old (Danvill 2002, 50; Canadian Encyclopedia Website 2007). And in three small caves overlooking the Bluefish River, a little over 50 kilometres southwest of the Vuntut Gwichin village of Old Crow, more mammoth bones (together with the bones of other Pleistocene animals, plus some of perhaps the very stone tools used to butcher them), also bearing traces of butchering, were dug out of the loess soil deposits that covered the floor of the caves. These were radiocarbon dated at between 25 000 and 12 000 years old (Clark 1991, 25-29; Danvill 2002, 50; Cinq-Mars 2001 & Cinq-Mars 2007; McClelland 1987, 3-5).

If most scientists agree that the remote ancestors of today's Yukon Aboriginals did indeed come from Siberia via Beringia, most Aboriginals disagree. Hugh Brody reports that Ted Chamberlin, his friend and fellow special advisor to the 1990s Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, had a vision of a new historiography, one which grew from the voices and knowledge of Aboriginal experts and elders in combination with the discourse of ethnography and archaeology, but his vision ultimately failed when Aboriginals and scholars were unable to reconcile their beliefs on the original

home of "Indians" (Brody 2000, 107-108). The theory of a Beringian land bridge over which the ancestors of present-day Aboriginal peoples of the Americas are believed to have walked between Siberia and Yukon and Alaska in the course of either a single or perhaps several successive glacial periods, the last of which occurred as late as some 12 000 years before present, is a particularly suitable one (some Aboriginals might even say a "self-serving" one) for a people of migrants who have recently come to the Americas from an elsewhere (mostly Europe) to occupy what was to them a new land. I have at various times heard several Euro-Canadians cite just this origin story for Canada's Aboriginal peoples to justify past and current wrongs perpetrated upon Canada's Aboriginal peoples by arguing that "we are all immigrants to this place; it's just that some came earlier and some came later, but no one has a really greater claim to any part of Canada than anyone else; after all, are we not all just immigrants?"

According to the Tutchone origin story, it was crow who restored the world following a universal flood at the beginning of the present cycle of time. According to Tommy McGinty, "Crow means *ts'ehk'i* in our language. But *ts'ehk'i* has got to have two names, Whiteman's way. Sometimes you have to call him God because that's God who made the world. And sometimes you have to call him crow too, because that's him, the crow, who really made the world we live on. You call him God or crow, either way, back and forth" (McGinty in Legros 1999, 43). For Yukon Aboriginal peoples, the notion of a creation *in situ* is particularly fitting since they have no memory of any ancestors ever coming from an elsewhere and in that sense it is true that they have always been Americans; that their existence is indivisible from the

existence of a land made up, to quote Craig Howe, at least in part “of the dust of the bones of generations of [their] people” (2002, 164). This is why Aboriginal peoples feel that their existence is indivisible from the existence of the land and that is why creation stories in which the land is first created and/or laid out or rebuilt by some extra-ordinary agency, and on which their people have lived ever since, feels so right to them.

As we shall see in the next chapter, however, the prevalence of similar raven creation story cycles among Aboriginals living on both sides of the Bering Strait strongly suggests the existence of contacts between them at some point during their existence. But a high degree of probability of some form or forms of communication between Yukon Aboriginals and Siberian Aboriginals in the past does not prove one theory more than the other. Of itself the existence of similar raven creation stories on both sides of what is now the Bering Strait could serve as argument in favour of either option; while scientists could argue that the ancestors of today’s Yukon Aboriginals must have crossed from Asia over the Bering Strait land bridge, bringing their traditional stories with them; Yukon Aboriginals could counter that some of their long ago ancestors must have travelled to Siberia and shared their traditional stories with local Aboriginals, or, alternatively, that some Yukon Aboriginals crossed over to populate Siberia.

CONTACT AMONG ABORIGINALS

It is impossible to know how much contact there was between the various Yukon First Nations and between them and their Pacific coastal

neighbours in ancient times, but it is reasonable to assume that there must have always been a certain amount of commercial and cultural exchanges between them. By the time Russian merchants began to make contact with the Aboriginals living along the Alaskan coast between 1745 and 1770 (de Laguna 1972, Part I, 108-207), trading patterns between the Tlingit on the coast and their inland Yukon Athapaskan neighbours were already well established (Legros 2007a, 21; McClelland 1987, 7; Cruikshank 2005, 65). According to McClelland, coastal Tlingit's own legends "stress the fortunate discovery of the interior *gunana* (stranger, Tlingit), who could supply them with native copper and furs. At that time, the coastal Tlingit are said to have provided the *gunana* with seaweed rather than guns and calico... [these last two articles having become staples of the Tlingit – Tutchone trade once the former had made contact with Europeans]" (1975, 502). According to Dominique Legros, the unique source of copper nuggets in the entire region was on lands controlled by the Tutchone and their Nabesna/Upper Tanana neighbours (2007, 21), and when La Pérouse visited them in 1786, the Tlingit owned numerous articles made of copper (Legros, *ibid.*; de Laguna 1972, Part I, 115-116). It is therefore fair to suppose that the pattern of Tlingit – Tutchone trade was already well-established at least some time before La Pérouse's visit.

The Tlingit seem to have monopolized the trade with the Tutchone right from the start. And if they managed to prevent Europeans and Euro-American merchants from trading directly with the Aboriginals of the Yukon Plateau almost to the end of the 19th century, they also managed just as effectively to prevent the Tutchone and the other interior nations from

travelling to the coast and trading directly with Europeans. They were bent on maintaining their monopoly for one very good reason: the trade was highly lucrative. Legros has calculated that Tlingit profits reached a whopping 2000 percent (1984, 22)! The actual trading was carried out according to a long-established protocol. First, only high ranking individuals of both sides could participate, and if lower-ranked individuals wanted to take part in the exchange, they could only do so through the intermediary of their own people's high ranking traders, who charged a substantial fee for their trouble. This rule was strictly enforced and offenders were punished with severe beatings and even death! Second, each high ranking Tutchone had a high ranking Tlingit counterpart, always the same, with whom he traded exclusively. Any violation of this rule would have constituted a gross breach of protocol and would very likely have resulted in bloodshed. Third, these commercial exchanges always took place at prearranged places and times. They lasted from two days to perhaps a week and invariably began with a ritual exchange of presents. Once presents had been offered and accepted by both sides, the actual exchange would begin and continue until the Tlingit had purchased all of the goods that the Tutchone had to sell. And, finally, once the trading was done, the trading partners agreed upon a time and place for the following year's trading session, after which the Tlingit leader and his men, heavily laden with bulging packs, departed for their villages on the Pacific coast (Legros 1984; McClelland 1975, 502-510; Campbell & Stewart in Johnson & Legros eds. 2000, 45 & passim; Campbell in Wilson 1970, 98).

This pattern was not altered in any way when the Tlingit began to trade with Europeans and Euro-Americans in the 18th century; except that the goods that they carried over the mountain passes into Yukon to exchange for the Tutchone's furs and leathers now included an array of European-made goods ranging from glass beads and calico to steel adzes and knives, and muskets and gunpowder. According to Kenneth Coates,

When John McLeod explored the Upper Liard River basin in 1831 he found that many natives possessed Russian goods. Hundreds of miles to the north, along the Porcupine River, John Bell similarly encountered substantial evidence that indirect Russian trade had penetrated well within British territory. Even the Inuit along the Arctic coast were able to secure coveted manufactured goods through intermediary groups. [...] Acting through Hän and Tutchone intermediaries, the Tlingits soon drew much of the upper Yukon basin into their trading sphere (1993, 21-2).

The Tlingit did not themselves carry their trade beyond the Tutchone's country (Yukon Native Brotherhood 1973, 7). For, as Dominique Legros writes, the fact that they had to carry their trade goods on their backs over steep mountain passes and into Tutchone country as far as the Stewart River, all the while living on provisions they also had to carry on their backs from the Pacific coast, effectively prevented their bringing in sufficient goods to trade outside of Tutchone country (Legros 2007a, 23, 47-8). This is the reason why the Hän who lived further down the Yukon River past Tutchone territory, for example, traded with the Tutchone who acted as middlemen between them and the Tlingit, who were themselves middlemen between European and Euro-American merchants and the Tutchone.

That Aboriginals have long travelled between the Yukon interior and the Alaskan coast was graphically demonstrated in August 1999 when sheep hunters found the body of an approximately 20 year old Aboriginal man melting from a glacier within Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park, near the

border between Alaska, southern Yukon and northern British Columbia. Scientists have since determined that his death was probably accidental and most likely occurred sometime between AD 1416 and 1445 (Cruikshank 2005, 246-7).

The Tutchone did not spend all of their time trading with the Tlingit or with their Hän or other Athapaskan neighbours. They were hunter-gatherers who ranged over a well-defined territory according to the availability of various resources at different times of the year. In winter, some of them congregated at lake narrows where it was relatively easy to net fish through holes in the ice while others separated into small one or two family units to pursue forest game such as moose, hares, squirrels, etc., living in brush shelters and moving camp from kill to kill. In spring, they trapped beaver and muskrat for their fur and meat as well as caught returning waterfowl. In summer, when the salmon returned on its annual spawning journey up its native streams, they caught as many as they could, drying them and storing them in caches for future use. In fall, during the moose's mating season, they killed as many as possible, drying the meat and storing it in caches too. They also hunted smaller animals such as hares and arctic ground squirrel (locally called "gophers"), picked berries of all sorts, dug edible roots and harvested the edible soft inner bark of evergreens, all of which were also stored for future use. Those of the Tutchone who lived in certain portions of their territory also hunted caribou on its annual migration (McClelland 1975, 95-106; Legros 2007a, 237-348).

But the Tutchone's life didn't only consist in occasional trading and the never ending gathering, hunting and fishing of food. Tutchone women spent

much of their time tanning hides into leather and fur that they later used in the making of clothing and footwear for their family. They laced snowshoes, prepared animal sinew and gathered and split spruce roots for future use as sewing thread, wove baskets, made and repaired fishing nets, cut and dried fish and game animals, trapped gophers, hares and other small animals, picked and processed berries, cared for babies, to name but some of the tasks that they assumed. Tutchone men spent much time at the pursuit of large game animals; they made snowshoe frames, toboggans, animal and fish traps, fashioned tools and tool handles, hunting weapons, and so on; they travelled far afield to collect tool making materials such as birch staves and stones of various kinds, set traps and erected deadfalls, built rafts and moose-skin boats for lake and river travel, to name but a few of the tasks generally performed by Tutchone men. Men and women were equally responsible for educating the young and elders of both genders spent considerable time passing on the traditions and telling the old stories (Legros 2007a, 315-374; McClelland 1975, 253-298).

The Tutchone lived on the Yukon Plateau where they occupied a territory that very approximately stretched from the high mountains and valleys within what is now the eastern limits of Kluane National Park and Reserve in the west to the southern portion of the Canol Road in the east and from the Yukon – British Columbia border in the south to very approximately 50 kilometres south of present day Dawson City in the north, with Fort Selkirk, again very approximately, at the geographical centre of this territory (after a map in Legros 2007a, 105). They were divided into 11 regional groups that were interconnected by marriage and trade and who spoke mutually

intelligible variants of a single language (Legros 2007a, 3 & 100-114). Three or four of these regional groups would meet approximately once or twice each year to trade and socialize but otherwise remained in their respective regions. The Tutchone were matrilineal; that is, they reckoned their descent along the female line, and were divided into two moieties, the wolves and the crows. One automatically belonged to one's mother's moiety and could only marry someone belonging to the opposite moiety. In other words, a wolf person could only marry a crow person, and vice versa. This rule was strictly enforced; in the days before the Tutchone legal system was replaced by the Euro-Canadian legal system around the turn of the 20th century, any breach of this fundamental rule was always automatically punishable by the death of both culprits (Legros 2005, 4). Pre- and early contact Tutchone society was characterised by vertical social division. A small number of extended families, known as *dan noži'*, or rich families controlled the trade with the Coastal Tlingit and kept for themselves certain vital resources such as the best and most consistently productive fishing locations. And furthermore the *dan noži'* owned slaves, or *yandyé*, that were either taken from among their own people or kidnapped from neighbouring Athapaskan nations (Legros 2007a, 1 & 1982, 65). The rest of Tutchone families, the *čəkadyé*, or poor people, although nominally independent, were nevertheless subject to the good will of the *dan noži'* for Tlingit trade goods as well as for access to the best production zones (ibid.). This systematic social inequality prevailed until the imposition of Euro-Canadian law throughout Yukon Territory during the Gold Rush of 1898 and its immediate aftermath, after which it declined rapidly to

virtually disappear altogether within little more than a decade (Legros 2007a, 1-2).

FIRST EUROPEAN CONTACT

The first recorded direct contact between Europeans and the Tutchone occurred when Hudson's Bay Company trader Robert Campbell arrived at the confluence of the Yukon and Pelly Rivers in 1843. In late July or early August 1840, Campbell and 4 companions (a Métis voyageur named Hoole and three Aborigines from the Liard River district) made their way on foot from Frances Lake (which lake Campbell had been the first white man to "discover" just a few days earlier) over the divide between the Liard River watershed and the Pelly River (part of the Yukon River watershed). He named this height of land "Pelly Banks" and went down to the Pelly and followed it downstream for approximately 15 miles before turning back (Wilson 1970, 41-45). Immediately upon his return, Campbell wrote a letter to his superiors describing the potential of this newly discovered region in such glowing terms that in 1842 he was sent back to Frances Lake where he immediately began to build a trading post (ibid. 56). Early the following year (1843) Campbell sent his men to build a "house" at Pelly Banks (Campbell in Wilson 1970, 68). In June, this house was the launching point for his reconnaissance expedition down the Pelly River. Late in June of that year, Campbell and his crew of rowers arrived at the junction of the Pelly and the Yukon River, which Campbell named the Lewes River. Here he met the local Tutchone (whom he called "Wood Indians" and their two *dan noži*, Hanan

and Thlinikik-thling for the first time (ibid. 70). Campbell's original orders were to paddle down the Pelly all the way to where it flows into the ocean, but Hanan and Thlinikik-thling did all they could to dissuade him from going any further, arguing that the inhabitants further down the river were a most fierce, bloodthirsty lot who would surely kill him and his crew on sight. Campbell wanted to go on in spite of the warning, but his Aboriginal paddlers were so appalled by this dire warning that they refused to go any further and Campbell had no choice but to turn back (ibid. 71). Progress was slower now that they were paddling against the current and three days into the return trip Campbell noticed that the Tutchone had lit several signal fires on the hilltops on both sides of the river. He "conjectured that as in Scotland in the olden times, these were signals to gather the tribes so that they might surround and intercept us" (ibid. 72). On the fourth day, a party on shore signalled them to come ashore, which they did, landing in the face of warriors with drawn bows. It was a tense moment, but after some communication (through signs and gestures) and a gift of tobacco, the Tutchone warriors eventually let Campbell and his men get back into their canoe, though Campbell allows that "It required some finesse however to get away from them; but once in the canoe, we quickly pushed out of range of their arrows & struck obliquely down stream for the opposite bank, while I faced about gun in hand, to watch their actions" (ibid.). Campbell stayed up all of that night to keep watch while his exhausted crew slept, but nothing happened and he saw no one. Five years later he learned from the now friendlier Tutchone that they had watched him all through that long night and had he shown any sign of weakness, they would have killed him and his crew (ibid. 73). In his

subsequent report to his superiors, he wrote in glowing terms of the prospects of opening a post at the forks of the Pelly and Lewes Rivers (ibid. 76-79). In preparation for an eventual move down the Pelly, and to get to know the surrounding country better, as well as in hopes that the Tutchone would gradually get used to the HBC's presence, he kept sending two or three of his Aboriginal hunters to hunt along the Pelly River every summer over the next four years (ibid. 88-9).

THE FIRST TRADING POST

Late in the 1847-8 winter, Campbell received his orders to establish a trading post at the confluence of the Pelly and Lewes (Yukon) Rivers. In May, he and his assistant James Stewart, eight Métis and French Canadian engagés, plus an unspecified number of Aboriginal hunters started down the Pelly on their way to the forks. Near where they'd been confronted by armed warriors five years earlier, they were now met by a group of Tutchone who turned out to be the very same group that had previously threatened them. This time, they offered Campbell a "pack of furs" as a token of good will, but he refused to accept it without payment. Here an interesting incident occurred; the leader of the Tutchone party made him understand that his leg had gone lame right after the confrontation of five years earlier. He was convinced that this was due to "medicine" that Campbell had cast upon him. He wished for Campbell to restore the use of his leg. In his personal journal Campbell writes that he "postponed the cure for the moment," but once encamped at the site of the new post on June 1, he tried "[his] medical skills"

and the cure proving successful, acquired somewhat of a reputation as a “doctor” among the Tutchone (ibid. 96-7). In the official post journal, however, Campbell reports this incident as taking place on June 7: “Four men and 2 boys arrived from above (Wood Indians). Bought a few pounds of meat and a few skins. 3 went off and 3 remained, one with a sore leg, put a plaster on it and it is to be hoped it will do it good” (Campbell & Stewart in Johnson & Legros eds. 2000, 3).

That summer, while Campbell and his crew erected the post buildings, the two *dan noži'*, Hanan and Thlinikik-thling visited several times, always apparently very friendly, always seemingly pleased that the post had been established. Then, in early August, a party of Chilkat Tlingit arrived from the Pacific coast to trade with the Tutchone. They told Campbell that they lived on Lynn Canal and that they traded with the HBC steamer Beaver commanded by Captain Dodd—the Russian-American Company had sold its trading rights to the Pacific coastline in 1839 (Legros 2007a, 20). Campbell immediately began an exchange of letters with Captain Dodd, the Tlingit acting as mailmen “for a small fee” (Campbell in Wilson 1970, 97). The fact that Campbell also began a fishery at nearby Tatlmain Lake (ibid. 98) (over the next four years this would often save him and his men from starvation) is also interesting in that this could not have been much to the Tutchone’s liking, nor particularly pleasing to the two *dan noži'* Hanan and Thlinikik-thling because the Tatlmain fishery was one of their major and best winter food sources and this, together with other factors, must have contributed to their decision to be diplomatically “away” when the Tlingit came to take over Fort Selkirk four years later.

That summer Campbell evidently also began a liaison with a Tutchone woman, whom he calls "the beloved" in both his private and official journals. That the lady was already married is made clear in Campbell's official journal entry for October 2: "A party of four Indians & two wives (the "Beloved" being one of them) were crossed this morning from the other side of the Lewes. They brought only small pieces of Meat. They went off in the evening, Beloved & all, bad luck to her she left sorrow behind her" (in Johnson & Legros Eds 2000, 14).

There are many discrepancies between Campbell's personal journal and memoirs and the official *Journal of Occurrences at the Forks of the Lewes and the Pelly Rivers*; for example, for the summer of 1851 Campbell writes in his journal and memoirs that while he was away exploring the Yukon River, Stewart, whom he'd left in charge at Fort Selkirk had a great deal of trouble with the Chilkats, a party of whom

planned to take the fort and kill Mr. Stewart and men, but were thwarted by the opportune arrival of a party of Wood Indians under our old friend Thlinikik-thling and his son. The tables were turned on the Chilkats whom Mr. Stewart had to shut up in the house till he could get the Wood Indians pacified. Then he let them out and they decamped in all haste. The Wood Indians were determined to kill them in revenge for their meditated murder of the whites, their friends (Campbell in Wilson 1970, 117-8).

And yet Stewart, who wrote the official journal daily entries throughout that summer, though he records having some difficulties with the Tlingits at times, seems to have found the Wood (Tutchone) Indians very nearly as troublesome as the Tlingit. For example, part of his entry for June 25 reads, "Hanin & party arrived with 2 or 3 ps. of meat & of course a long jaw. Thereon of all Indians ever I saw they are the most troublesome & worthless. Weather still unsettled and very warm and sultry. Indians are going off but when is the

question. They are such a set of liars" (Stewart in Johnson & Legros eds. 2000, 106). As for the Chilkat party, they were indeed difficult, though, according to the official journal entries, never as much as Campbell would have it in his personal journal and memoirs, and when Thlinikik-thling finally arrived on July 23, Stewart wrote, "there is some prospect now of these brutes getting something to trade & our getting clear of them" (ibid. 110). What seems to have actually happened is that the Tlingit had arrived for their scheduled meeting with Thlinikik-thling and his party but the Tutchone were late, and to pass time as they waited for them, the Tlingit harassed Stewart. But as soon as Thlinikik-thling arrived, they seem to have had more important business to take care of. In reality, neither Hanan, nor Thlinikik-thling seem to have been hostile toward the Tlingit in any way. But perhaps these discrepancies can be explained by the fact that after the sack of Fort Selkirk, Campbell tried repeatedly to convince his superiors to allow him to reopen it and should he have actually told them the truth, that the Tutchone were nowise the staunch allies against the Tlingit that he made them out to be, his superiors would have been even less likely than they already were to grant him the permission he so badly wanted.

Fort Selkirk operated in the red throughout its four year existence. Kenneth Coates writes that, "it never made a profit in any of the first five [sic] years" (1993, 24). Even Campbell had to grudgingly concede that the Tutchone always reserved their best furs for the trade with the Tlingit. On August 31, 1849 he wrote in the official fort journal:

The Confounded Chilcat & Thlinskit [Thlinikik-thling] has intercepted them all ["all" refers to previously mentioned "Indians from below", who were probably Hän from the Dawson area who'd come up the Yukon with furs to trade], taken all their fur & etc. and returned them back empty handed. In the evening 8 More Chilcats

arrived down the Lewis fresh from the Coast. They are the party who arrived 19th September last. This makes 45 Indian traders who have arrived within the past week. They have already taken up about a boat load of Fur & Leather and we servants of the Honourable Coy. have not yet got the 20th part of a pack seen (Campbell & Stewart in Johnson & Legros eds. 2000, 45).

From this and numerous other similar entries, it is clear that the Tutchone – Chilkat Tlingit trading partnership thrived unabated throughout the existence of Fort Selkirk. The Tutchone seem to have used Campbell's post as something of a convenience store where they obtained unexpectedly needed goods between Chilkat visits. What also seems evident, judging by the preponderance of entries to that effect in the official post journal, is that the item that Campbell purchased most often from the Tutchone was meat, fresh and dried, not furs, the greatest number and the best of which the Tutchone appear to have withheld for trading with the Tlingit.

If Campbell could never compete successfully with his rivals from the Pacific coast it is largely because of the prohibitively high cost of bringing trade goods all the way from Norway House in present-day Manitoba. Because of this high cost he was forced to charge considerably more for the goods he sold the Tutchone than the Tlingit who's own supply line was infinitely shorter—they told Campbell that it took them only 12 days to travel from the head of Lynn Canal to Fort Selkirk (ibid. 6). And to make matters worse, because of the enormous distance from its supply depot, Fort Selkirk was chronically short of precisely those trade items that the Tutchone prized most. In his official post journal, Campbell often voices his resulting frustration. For example, on October 13, 1848 he writes,

Our tobacco, with the parsimonious economy we used it, run out [i.e., lasted] till yesterday. But now we are entirely without it, and a sad disappointment to the Indians to be without this must be delicious Weed. The only thing for which they

come to the Fort. To be without almost all trading articles & it in particular make my situation anything but a pleasant one, not even an Interpreter [Llewellyn Johnson notes here that in a letter to Governor Simpson, Stewart complained that, lacking an interpreter, he and Stewart could only communicate with the Indians by signs (ibid. 150)] I and the Company's interests owe a deep debt of gratitude to someone for bringing such circumstances (ibid. 16).

This is a recurring theme in all the journals. It so frustrated Campbell that he tendered his resignation several times during his career (see for example Murdock McPherson in Wilson 1970, 88), though he never actually carried out the threat.

THE SACK OF FORT SELKIRK

The original site of Fort Selkirk on the east side of the Yukon River, just south of where the Pelly River flows into it, was far from ideal; for one thing it flooded every spring when the ice broke up. More importantly, it was on the wrong side of the Yukon River. Almost directly across, on a high bank where there never was any flooding, was located one of the Tutchone's semi-permanent campsites—it also happened to be “the beloved's camp”(see Campbell's map in Johnson & Legros eds. 2000, 23). And, most important of all, it was the long-established site of the trading between the Tutchone and the Tlingit. It was also one of the favoured sites for the trade between the Tutchone and the other Athapaskan nations who lived further down the Yukon River (Easton et al. 1996, 20). Tired of the yearly flooding and of being on the wrong side of the river, Campbell decided to build a new post near the traditional Tutchone campsite on the west bank. In a June 1852 letter to his immediate superior, Campbell admits that the new site had actually been

chosen on their arrival at the Forks in 1848. But, 'doubtful of the disposition of the Indians, who were numerous, we built the first fort in thick woods on the very point of confluence of the two rivers' (Wilson 1970, 120). As events showed, his initial fears were justified, for the move proved to be the post's undoing. Even in its original location on the opposite side of the Yukon, the Tlingit barely tolerated it, but when they arrived in 1852 to find the post moved across the river, they decided to eliminate it.

Campbell describes the events that took place from the time the Tlingit arrived until they forced him and one of the engagés named MacLeod down the river bank and into a skiff—a period of a little over 24 hours. From the moment they arrived they told him repeatedly that he better leave if he “wanted to see another day” (Campbell in Wilson 1970, 122). According to Campbell, once in the skiff, he and his companion started to paddle down the river towards Fort Yukon, from where Campbell had been expecting Stewart and several engagés to return at any moment. But instead of Stewart and his crew, they soon spotted Hanan with a large Tutchone armed party on the riverbank. Together, they all walked back along the shore to the new post, which they found deserted, but sacked. Campbell tried to convince Hanan to accompany him in pursuit of the departed Tlingit, but Hanan pragmatically said that since Campbell had no goods left to trade and was therefore left with no other choice but to leave the country, the Tutchone would once again be totally dependent upon the Tlingit for European goods. This being so, he deemed it best to let the Tlingit go (Wilson 1970, 124-5).

The Tutchone tradition tells a slightly different story: It seems that the Tlingit overpowered Campbell and his Tutchone mistress, bound them hand

and foot and tossed them into a canoe and set them adrift down the Yukon. It was Chief Hanan who rescued them. In gratitude, Campbell gave his name to the Tutchone Chief, whose descendants still use the name Campbell as their family name (Selkirk Development Corporation 2000). Regardless of which is the correct version, Hanan was certainly correct in that Campbell had no choice but to leave immediately, which he and Stewart did. In his and Dominique Legros' 2000 edition of Campbell and Stewart's official post journal, Llewellyn R. Johnson adds the following interesting anecdote:

The husband of Campbell's granddaughter, John Waddy, an Indian Agent, provides the information that Chachoza Flett [Chachoza was the Aboriginal bride of Andrew Flett, an Orkneyman in the employ of the HBC who had been posted at Fort Selkirk and who married the daughter of one of the post's Aboriginal hunters whom Campbell refers to as "Le Gauché"] gave birth to a child on a raft or canoe while the Chilcats were taking over Fort Selkirk. This intriguing information was learned by Waddy when in 1920 he asked an old Indian half-breed his age at Lac Brachette on Reindeer Lake, Saskatchewan. The man informed Waddy that he had been born at a HBC post on the Yukon River on the day that Campbell's post was being pillaged. The elderly man's name was William Flett. He would have been about 77 years of age at the time. Full information is contained in a margin note, (cf, p. 108 of Campbell's diary on microfilm HBCA B239/K/2) (Campbell & Stewart in Johnson & Legros eds. 2000, 153).

Campbell wanted most of all to be allowed to go back in force to Fort Selkirk the following spring and reopen the post, but his immediate superior, chief trader Anderson was of a different opinion. He argued that Fort Selkirk had never been profitable and was not likely to ever be, and that in view of the fact that the few furs that Campbell had actually managed to purchase would have in any case ended up in HBC hands at a considerably lower cost since the Tlingit traded with Captain Dodd of the HBC steamer Beaver on the Pacific Coast (Anderson in Wilson 1970, 126-7), it would be pointless to reopen it. Campbell decided to go over Anderson's head to the HBC's very

top, Governor George Simpson. He set off in the dead of winter on a 3000-mile snowshoe trek across Canada's frozen north, from Yukon to Manitoba, arriving at Crow Wing on March 13, 1853. From there he travelled by horse-drawn sleigh, boat and train the rest of the way to Montreal, where he made his plea to the Governor, arguing that he should be allowed to get his revenge on the Chilkats because if he did not some might deem him a coward. Simpson assured him that no one would ever suggest such a thing, refused permission to reopen Fort Selkirk, offered him a promotion, and sent him off on leave to Scotland (Wilson 1970, 132-3).

1852 – 1896

After the sack of Fort Selkirk in 1852, life in Tutchone country settled back into its pre-1848 pattern. The Tlingit continued to bar the Tutchone from the Pacific coast and direct access to European traders, just as they continued to bar access to the Yukon interior and the Tutchone to the Europeans. Between 1852 and 1881, the only Europeans to travel up the Yukon River to the site of Fort Selkirk, where they stayed for three days in 1867 were two Americans, Ketchum and Laberge on a survey expedition for the U.S. Russo-American Telegraph Company (Legros 2007a, 32). Such a short visit could obviously not have had a significant impact upon the Tutchone. Beginning in 1881, however, after the American army had forcefully broken the Tlingit monopoly on the Chilkoot Pass the previous year, "a half dozen gold-seekers" crossed part of Tutchone territory (*ibid.* 33). Four more panned for gold on the Stewart River in the northern part of Tutchone

country in 1883. That same year, an American Army lieutenant, Frederick Swatka, who'd been charged with exploring and mapping the Yukon, crossed Tutchone territory in about ten days. In 1884, the Anglican Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) sent a converted Gwich'in Aboriginal to explore the Stewart River. His impact upon the Tutchone must have however been limited since he did not speak their language. The same year, four more prospectors panned along the Stewart River. The following year, 1885, there were 11 prospectors on the Stewart. In 1884 and again in 1885, the steamer New Racket ascended the Yukon River from the Bering Sea, trading with every Aboriginal group it encountered, including those of Fort Selkirk, but it did not return after 1885, choosing to concentrate exclusively on supplying the needs of the prospectors along the Yukon instead. Between 1885 and 1889, the number of prospectors working in the interior of Yukon and Alaska steadily increased, though only a small portion spent time in Tutchone country, except in 1886 when approximately 100 of them panned for gold along the Stewart River. There were a few more short visits by various missionaries, but in the absence of trading posts and hence of a reliable source of supplies, none stayed in Tutchone territory beyond a few days. Then, in 1890, the Americans broke the Tlingit monopoly on the Chilkat Pass and an expedition by adventurers Edward Glave and Jack Dalton crossed into southern Tutchone territory (ibid. 31-6). In 1889, an American trader, Arthur Harper and his Hän wife opened a post at the site of Fort Selkirk. The following year, Anglican Reverend Thomas Canam and his wife set up a small church and school next to Harper's store (Selkirk Development

Corporation, 2000). This marks the beginning of permanent contact between the Tutchone and European peoples.

GOLD RUSH

In 1896, a Euro-American prospector by the name of George Carmacks, his Tagish wife, Kate, her brother Skookum Jim and their nephew, Dawson Charlie co-discovered gold on Rabbit Creek (soon renamed Bonanza Creek) in the middle of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (Hän) territory. Rabbit Creek flowed into the nearby Tr'ondëk River (that the prospectors mispronounced "Klondike"), a short distance from where it flows into the Yukon River (McClelland 1987, 84; Legros 2007a, 57; Coates 1993, 14). Canadian popular historian, Pierre Berton portrays Skookum Jim as an Indian "who longed to be a white man, in other words, a prospector.... He differed from the others in his tribe in that he displayed the white man's kind of ambition" (Berton in Cruikshank 1998, 74-5). Aboriginal historians tell a different story. Tagish elder, Mrs. Angela Sidney, who as a young girl helped nurse an ailing Skookum Jim during the last months of his life describes him as a man whose foremost concerns were love of his family and preserving his people's way of life. That Jim was involved in the Klondike discovery, according to Mrs. Sidney, came about more as a result of fortuitous circumstances than driving ambition. If he decided to go "downriver" with his sister's white husband and his other sister's son, it was only because he loved his sisters deeply and two of them had gone "downriver" two years earlier and hadn't been heard from since. Jim, as well as the rest of the

family, were anxious to find out what had happened to them, hence his opting to accompany his brother in law on his prospecting trip “downriver.” According to Tagish oral tradition, that Jim and his partners found gold and that it made him rich is almost incidental to Jim’s story which includes a frog spirit helper and a fateful encounter with Tl’anaxée dákw, or wealth woman. In Mrs. Sidney’s own words, “In the first place, he wasn’t looking for gold. Skookum Jim went downriver to look for his two sisters because he thought he’d go down the river too—to see if he could find his sisters, Aagé and Kate [sic]. They were strict about that kind of thing, old people” (Sidney in Cruikshank 1998, 80).

News of the discovery quickly spread to the outside world where it so caught popular imagination that in 1897-8 some 25 000 to 40 000 individuals joined in the ensuing Klondike Gold Rush (Legros 2007a, 57; Neufeld & Norris 1996, vi; McClelland 1987, 84; Coates 1993, 14). A small city called Dawson was literally banged together overnight. A detachment of the North West Mounted Police was sent to Yukon to keep order. Most of the miners already in Yukon moved to the new discovery, though a few remained in Tutchone country, still hoping to strike it rich there. A company of 200 soldiers was posted at Fort Selkirk in 1898, but they were re-deployed to the Dawson area the following year. But before leaving they erected barracks and several outbuildings, eleven in all around a central parade square (Yukon Government Guide to Fort Selkirk). According to Tutchone tradition, the soldiers never wasted an opportunity to impress the Tutchone with the might of their weapons. Every morning the soldiers loaded their canon with live ammunition and fired at the basalt cliffs across the river. I personally saw

the resulting scars on the cliffs when I visited Fort Selkirk in August 2006. "They shot off their 7-pound guns every day," says Tutchone elder Edward Simon (Selkirk Development Corporation 2000). According to Tutchone elders the soldiers were strange, rowdy invaders who even build their parade ground on one of their burial sites. "They were drunk and fighting all the time," comments elder Tommy McGinty (ibid.).

PASSING OF AN AGE-OLD SYSTEM

The Gold Rush marked the replacement of the traditional Yukon Aboriginal justice system with the Euro-Canadian system. This was forcibly demonstrated to all Yukon Aboriginals in 1899 when two Tagish brothers were hanged in Dawson for murdering a white prospector. According to the official Euro-Canadian version, in early spring 1898 two gold seekers on their way to Dawson City decided to take advantage of the ice breaking up and paused on the shore of McClintock River near where it flows into Marsh Lake (a major widening of the Yukon River) to build a boat. A small group of Aboriginals camped beside them as they finished the boat and even helped them load it and launch it. A few minutes later, however, the same Aboriginals fired upon the prospectors, killing one and wounding the other, who played dead while the boat drifted down the current long enough to survive and eventually make his way to Marsh Lake where he received help. The police soon arrested the four Nantuck brothers, Jim, Joe, Dawson and Frank, and brought them to Dawson City where a Judge McGuire presided over their trial. According to trial records, the accused did not deny their

crime, though their guilty plea was secured through the interpretation of two white prospectors whose own fluency in the Tagish language appears to have been minimal. A lawyer was appointed to defend the brothers, but he called no witnesses and presented no evidence in their defence. They were predictably found guilty and sentenced to hang. As to their motive, through their interpreters they stated that they attempted to kill the two white men because white men had previously killed two of their friends, refusing to elaborate further. According to the *Klondike Nugget* newspaper,

The questions put to the murderers by the judge through the interpreters showed them to be wholly deficient in the most ordinary morals. Their cunning, also, was of a low order. They could plot to destroy the two men in the boat and steal their goods but appeared to be stolidly indifferent to the results of the admissions they were making, though it was repeatedly impressed on them. Questioned about their knowledge of God or a future state, everyone was surprised to find that they knew nothing about either one. Even the 'Great Spirit' and the 'Happy Hunting Grounds' of the North American Indians were unknown to them (quoted in Cruikshank 1998, 86).

Frank and Joe Nantuck died of tuberculosis in the Dawson jail while awaiting the hangman. Jim and Dawson Nantuck were hanged at Dawson in August 1899 (McLaughlin 2007).

The Aboriginal version sheds light on the Nantuck brothers' real motives. According to elders Kitty Smith and Angela Sidney, in an abandoned prospectors' camp, an old lady and her nephew found a small tin can containing white powder that they mistook for baking powder. They had flour so they decided to make bread. Unfortunately the white powder turned out to be poisonous—probably arsenic used by prospectors to extract gold. The nephew ate some of the bread and so did his grandfather. When both men died, and because they belonged to the crow moiety, according to Tagish Athapaskan custom, it befell on all members of the crow moiety to

negotiate with the members of the offending group for a suitable repayment in goods. Failing that, according to Aboriginal custom, only the death of the social equivalents of the victims could fairly compensate the deaths. According to the Aboriginal oral tradition, the Nantuck brothers, all members of the crow moiety, camped next to the two prospectors to give them the opportunity to open formal negotiations meant to resolve the matter of the poisoning of the two Aboriginals. When the prospectors failed to open the hoped-for negotiations, the brothers felt they had no alternative but to take their lives (Cruikshank 1998, 97). According to Julie Cruikshank, the incident vividly illustrates the clashing of two conflicting justice systems: "Both written and oral narratives about the deaths [sic] at Marsh Lake resonate with statements about culturally appropriate behavior. They also suggest how bureaucratic practice begins to erase local knowledge" (ibid.).

AFTER THE KLONDIKE RUSH

The actual gold rush lasted only a few months, after which the Yukon's Euro-American population dwindled rapidly. By 1900 there were less than 10 000 left in the Dawson area. Mining companies soon replaced manual labour with more efficient machinery. They also moved rapidly to establish a shorter route to export ore and to import supplies than the more than 3000 kilometres by sternwheeler from Dawson to the mouth of the Yukon River on the Bering Sea. They built a narrow-gauge railway over the White Pass between Skagway at the head of Lynn Canal on the Pacific Ocean and the head of navigable waters on the Yukon River at the foot of the White Horse

Rapids (so named because their white foamy waters were said to resemble the flying mane of a galloping white horse). Here Yukonners built Whitehorse, the current territorial capital. From here steam-powered sternwheelers took over the rest of the way to the gold fields. In winter, the boats were replaced by horse-drawn sleighs hauling over a winter road between Whitehorse and Dawson (Coates 1993, 42; Legros 2007a, 58).

This year-round communication route had an immediate impact upon the Tutchone living in the Fort Selkirk area. They soon began to build their own small cabins next to the settlement on the banks of the Yukon River. By 1899, the post had grown into a busy town, with a RNWMP detachment, a post office, a sawmill, a telegraph office, two churches and many hotels and saloons—in addition to Rev. Canam's Anglican Church and school, a Catholic church was also built in 1898, but it closed in 1899 when the soldiers of the Yukon Expeditionary Force were posted elsewhere, leaving it without a single faithful—it was reopened by Father Marcel Bobillet in 1942. When the gold rush ended, Fort Selkirk became a quiet little community. A handful of non-Aboriginals lived there the year round. For the Tutchone, it remained a gathering place for trade, visiting and celebrations. But most of the year, they made their living on the land, hunting, gathering, fishing and trapping as they always had. Some of them also found seasonal work on the sternwheelers, cutting firewood and piloting the great cordwood rafts to Dawson. Skilled pilots such as Johnny TomTom and Little Sam could steer rafts of up to 120 cords of wood over 200 miles down river. Children went to school when they were at Selkirk but they got their real education on the land. Elder Danny Roberts comments: "Oh, I went to school here, on and off, but hunting in the

bush all the time. Every time I come back, go to school another month. Doing that all the time. All the kids do that anyway. Doing that all the time. In the bush with your family. Only way they're living; in the bush all the time." In 1932 the RCMP post was reopened after being shut down for 21 years. Constable G.I. Cameron and his wife and daughter moved into the RCMP detachment at Fort Selkirk where he was the town's Mountie for 14 years. Elder Tommy McGinty remembers a fatal flu epidemic in 1925: "They're making coffins every day. Every day they bury them. I was maybe 9 or 10 years old; I remember all the people crying all the time." In the late 1940s and early 1950s the sternwheeler era ended when new roads were built from Whitehorse to Mayo and Dawson. The end of the sternwheelers also meant the end of Fort Selkirk. Most of the people moved 35 miles upriver to Minto to work on the new road. They left many of their belongings behind expecting to return some day. The two stores closed. Father Bobillet moved to Carmacks. The Anglican Church and the RCMP detachment followed the people to Minto. By the late 1950s, most of the people moved to Pelly Crossing where the Klondike Highway spans the Pelly River, some 50 kilometres upstream from Fort Selkirk. One family, Danny and Abby Roberts and their daughter Lois stayed at Fort Selkirk. In winter they trapped and in summer they fished. Over the years, Danny Roberts became known as "the mayor of Fort Selkirk." He was still there when I visited Fort Selkirk in August 2006. N.B.: All the information in this paragraph is from the Selkirk First Nation's own account of its history, *Voices from the Past* (Selkirk Development Corporation 2000) (see also Yukon Native Brotherhood 1973, 8-9).

Tommy McGinty's recollections of the 1925 flu epidemic are unfortunately all too representative of numerous similar epidemics going back to even before actual contact with Europeans. A given Aboriginal population need not have been in direct contact with Europeans to fall prey to their diseases for which they had no acquired immunity in the way that Europeans did; it needed only to come into contact with other Aboriginals who had been, and even with Aboriginals who had dealt with other Aboriginals who had themselves had dealings with Europeans. According to Kenneth Coates,

Before the first non-Native commentators reached the [Yukon], diseases had already been visited upon the Natives, hampering any specific determination of the Aboriginal population based on historical sources. [...] ...most scholars agree that the arrival of Europeans had a severe impact on Aboriginal peoples. The precipitous decline [in population] originated in the virulence of 'virgin soil' epidemics.' [...] From 1835 to 1839, for example, a smallpox epidemic swept through the Alaskan interior and the Lynn Canal region. It is difficult to believe that the disease did not reach into the upper Yukon basin (Coates 1993, 8-10).

And the epidemics, naturally, became all the more frequent as thousands of outsiders swarmed into the territory, first during the Gold Rush, and again for the building of the Alaska Highway (Yukon Native Brotherhood 1973, 9).

THE ALASKA HIGHWAY

The sternwheeler era was effectively brought to a close by the building of the Alaska Highway and the Canol pipeline. Fear of Japanese attack on Alaska during the Second World War was the immediate cause of the American Army's building the Alaska Highway to Alaska and the Canol Road and Pipeline to Norman Wells so as to ensure a safe inland supply route. The Alaska Highway stretches from Dawson Creek in British Columbia through

Whitehorse in Yukon to Delta Junction, approximately 160 kilometres south of Fairbanks in Alaska. It was completed in 1943. Its impact upon the lives of all Yukon Aboriginals proved far greater than that of the Klondike Gold Rush. Even before the arrival of the bulldozers a number of Aboriginal men hired out as guides for the survey crews, and later as labourers and equipment operators (Coates 1993, 54). Others earned money in the more traditional occupation of supplying meat and fish to soldiers and contractors. Many Aboriginal women found work "taking in laundry, sewing and house cleaning" (ibid.) Many more sewed moccasins, beaded mittens and other traditional Aboriginal items that they sold to the newcomers. More detrimentally, several earned money catering to the special needs of "Thirty thousand Whitemen with no women of their own..." (Yukon Native Brotherhood 1973, 11). There had been relatively little sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women during the gold rush because so many white women came to "mine the miners" (Coates 1993, 46), but the opposite occurred during this second Euro-American invasion.

In little more than a year, the construction was over and the soldiers were on their way elsewhere, leaving behind a very different country from the one they had invaded a year before. The new road joined a hitherto relatively isolated territory to the North American Highways system. The net effect is best described in Yukon Aboriginals' own words:

In 1941 [sic] the American army moved in to build the Alaska highway. There was much money and jobs for any Indian who wanted to leave the bush. Many left their traplines and moved to places along the new highway. Thirty thousand Whitemen with no women of their own further changed the percentage of the blood of many Indian children. Four years later the war was over and most of the men left. But many more Indians had gotten used to the Whiteman's way, or at least the big money part of it. But the money left with the Americans. The traps were rusted and the cabins in

need of repair. Many did not go back to the traplines. Some of us moved into shacks on the edge of the White communities, and there were no jobs.

Then came Indian Affairs. They made up the Band lists. Then came welfare. Then they invented the Indian Village, where a group of Indians could all be put together. This made it easier for administration.

Later on came Indian housing which was (and still is today, even more than ever) used as a bribe to get Indian people to move in from the bush. So the final program of changing the Indian way of life from one of economic independence to a welfare hand-out was complete (Yukon Native Brotherhood 1973, 11).

INJUSTICE BREEDS MILITANCY

According to Kenneth Coates, after highway construction jobs dried up Yukon Aboriginals went back to their traditional occupations centered on the pursuit of game and this, together with the fact that in the late 1940s and early 1950s fur prices remained relatively high, provided for their basic needs (1993, 64-9). Shortly after the completion of the Alaska Highway, all-weather roads were pushed through to Dawson and Mayo, and this, in turn, as already mentioned, spelled the end of the sternwheeler era. Many Aboriginal settlements where the new roads did not go, such as Fort Selkirk, were abandoned and new villages such as Pelly Crossing, Snag and Haines Junction (all Tutchone villages) were built by the roadside (Legros 2007a, 60). Late in the 1950s, Aboriginal children were allowed to attend public Euro-Canadian schools from which they had previously been barred. School attendance became compulsory to age sixteen. Shortly after, all Yukon Aboriginals became eligible to receive old age pensions and Aboriginal mothers began receiving family allowances, like all other Canadian mothers. Yukon Aboriginals also became eligible to receive welfare payments (ibid. 60-1). Now that their children were compelled to attend school most of the

year, most families opted to abandon their ancestral nomadic hunting-gathering lifestyle since many of the best resources were located out on the land, far from the village schools and few parents were willing to spend extended periods of time away from their children. At about the same time, world fur prices collapsed, spelling the end of the last remaining traditional occupation for Aboriginal men. In the words of Yukon Aboriginals:

Many Whitemen say the Indian is lazy. What they do not realize is that the majority of the Indian people have not had an opportunity to provide for his family in the Whiteman's World. The government has not helped to provide this opportunity. He does not have the education or skills which will allow him to make a living at something he understands and wants to do. The Indian Agent and Welfare Officer have replaced the Indian as head of his own family. Because he is unable to make a living within the changed society, his wife calls the Indian Agent when she needs food, clothing, or firewood" (Yukon Native Brotherhood 1973, 17).

Before the 1970s "Indians were relegated to reserves (sic.²⁵) on the edge of town, restricted from access to hospitals and schools, and scorned as drunks, loafers, and carriers of disease" (Coates 1993, 74-5). In Mayo, for example, it wasn't the teachers, or the administration that refused to admit Aboriginal children into the public school, rather it was the violent objections of a few white families that effectively kept them out (ibid. 95). And in most centres, Yukon whites consistently insisted on the segregation of hospitals. At the Mayo hospital for example, Aboriginals received treatment in a tent at the rear of the main structure" (ibid.). Although virtually all Yukon Aboriginals became nominally Christians, according to Coates this is somewhat misleading because the missionaries actually only succeeded in "restructuring the Indians' relationship with the deity," while missing "the core

²⁵ "Ghettos" or "shanty-towns" might be a more accurate wording since in Yukon virtually none of these were "official" reserves (Dominique Legros, personal communication).

of native spirituality" (ibid. 133). Dominique Legros similarly reports that in spite of the availability of Catholic, Baptist and Anglican churches in Carmacks, "a large number of Tutchone deliberately chose the Pentecostal faith.... Yet this choice was not entirely arbitrary. The Pentecostal belief that demons are responsible for both physical disease and psychological disorders diverged little from Tutchone shamanistic beliefs. The old practices were therefore continuing covertly under a new guise" (2007a, 63).

In 1973 the Yukon Native Brotherhood tabled Canada's first comprehensive land claim, collected in a document called *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow: A Statement of Grievances and an Approach to Settlement by the Yukon Indian People*. Until its 1973 publication, many Euro-Canadian Yukonners had clung to the belief that Aboriginals had been treated fairly and had willingly accepted the imposition of State and Church authority over their lives. *Together Today* effectively ended that delusion (Coates 1993, 231). On February 14, 1973 a delegation of Yukon Chiefs presented a copy of *Together Today* to Prime Minister Trudeau in Ottawa. The Prime Minister accepted it as a basis for negotiations (McClelland 1987, 101-2). Negotiations, however, proved long and arduous. One reason why they took so long has to do with the real politics of Canadian federal – provincial relations. Ottawa seems to have deliberately stalled at the instigation of the British Columbia Provincial government. The BC government had always refused to consider any of the repeated demands of its Aboriginal population for treaty negotiations. Just like those in Yukon, most BC Aboriginal nations had never signed any treaty with either Ottawa or Victoria and should Ottawa and Whitehorse settle with Yukon First Nations,

this would have made the long-standing BC Government position untenable (Coates 1993, 236). Negotiations dragged on for a full 20 years before an umbrella final agreement was reached with four Yukon nations in 1993. And, as mentioned in introduction, for the Selkirk First Nation, final negotiations necessary to achieve the “setting things right again” that elder Lizzie Hall mentioned in 2006 are ongoing.

THE ATHAPASKAN LINGUISTIC FAMILY

The Tutchone belong to the Athapaskan linguistic family. According to anthropologist Guy Lanoue, the Athapaskan linguistic family includes a large number of Aboriginal groups with a wide variety of lifestyles ranging from nomadic and/or sedentary, and from fishermen to pastoralists and hunters who live from the Arctic Circle in the north to the Southwestern USA in the south—though as Cook 2003 shows, the Athapaskan language family also includes the Toboso Nation of Mexico—and from the West Coast of Alaska in the west to the shores of Hudson’s Bay in the East (Lanoue 1998, 3). The Athapaskan language family belongs to the Na-Dené phylum, which also includes Eyak, Tlingit and possibly Haida, though linguists do not all agree that Haida really belongs in this phylum (Cook 2003, 158; Rice 1998, 75). With some 130,000 speakers, nearly three-quarters of whom are Navajo speakers, Athapaskan (spelt *Athabaskan* in the US and generally spelt *Athapascan* in French) “is the most populous [Aboriginal] language family in North America (Cook 2003, 158). Linguistic researchers generally separate the members of the Athapaskan language family into three distinct groups on

the basis of their geographic location; the Southern Athapaskan, which include the Navajo, the Jiricarilla Apache, the Kiowa Apache, the Western Apache, the Mescalero Apache, the Chiricahua Apache, the Lipan Apache and the Toboso; the Pacific Coast Athapaskan, which include the Coquille, the Tututni, the Upper Umpqua, the Galice, the Eucher Creek, the Chasta Costa, the Applegate, the Chetco, the Tolowa, the Chilula, the Hupa, the Whilkut, the Mattole, the Nongatl, the Sinkyone, the Lassik, the Wailaki and the Kato; while the Northern Athapaskan members of the family include the Ahtna, the Babine, the Beaver, the Carrier, the Southern Carrier, the Chilcotin, the Chipewyan (Dene), the Degexit'an, the Dogrib, the Gwich'in (Kutchin or Loucheux), the Han, the Holikachuk, the Ingalik, the Kaska, the Kolchan, the Koyukon, the Sarsi (Sarcee), the Sekani, the North Slavey, the South Slavey, the Tagish, the Tahltan, the Tanacross, the Tanaina, the Lower Tanana, the Upper Tanana, the Tsetsaut, the Northern tutchone (often spelt *Tuchoni* in French), the Southern Tutchone and the Upper Kuskokwin²⁶ (after Cook 2003).

Linguistic evidence suggests that the region consisting of interior Alaska, Yukon and Northern British Columbia was the original American homeland of the Athapaskan language family (ibid. 158). According to linguist Keren Rice, Athapaskan languages are "extremely complex" and present "a sizeable challenge for linguists" (1998, 75), in large part because of their verbal complexity. Cook concurs: "The verbal morphology is notable for its complexity: e.g., ten prefix positions were established for Chipewyan by Li 1946 and many more (with sub-positions) for Ahtna by Kari 1979..." (2003,

²⁶ Note that the names used to designate these linguistic boundaries are not necessarily the same as the political names used to designate the peoples within them.

159), and that's only the beginning of Athapaskan verb complexity. Rice writes that Athapaskan verbs often translate into entire sentences in French or English, so extensive is the sum of information contained in them (1998, 79). Mrs. Lizzie Hall indicated much the same for the Northern Tutchone verb during our 2006 work together. Basic Athapaskan word order is subject – object – verb, though different word orders are also possible in various situations (Cook 2003, 160). Lizzie Hall reported much the same basic word order for Northern Tutchone, and then added that speakers often stray from this basic order for variety and that this has little effect on the meaning of sentences. Finally, gender is not marked in Athapaskan languages; it must be deduced from the context. This, as we will see, can sometimes cause problems for translators like Mrs. Hall, who sometimes had to admit that a translation that she had produced two or three sentences earlier had proven wrong once the context became clearer in a subsequent sentence²⁷. In all such cases she would always ask me to turn back the recording to the sentence in question so that she could retranslate it correctly.

Linguists generally separate the Tutchone into Northern Tutchone and Southern Tutchone. According to Cook 2003, the Northern Tutchone are also called "Selkirk". There were 1,000 Northern Tutchone in 1995, of whom 200 were still fluent speakers of the language, the youngest speakers being in their thirties and forties. In other words, virtually no one under the age of

²⁷ Tommy McGinty seems to have often used this gender ambiguity as one more tool in his storytelling tool kit in Northern Tutchone by deliberately leaving his listeners in suspense as to who exactly was doing what to whom or who was speaking and who was listening, and so on, as long as feasible. This of course was entirely lost in his own English translation since he always knew who was performing an action and English required him to use names or pronouns, though I occasionally wondered as I listened to his taped performances in English, if his rather ambiguous use of English personal pronouns was sometimes perhaps not so much due to his lack of fluency in English as to a deliberate attempt to achieve the same effect that he had been able to achieve in his Northern Tutchone telling.

thirty could speak their ancestral language fluently, which augurs ill for the long term survival of the language. They live in Central Yukon's Mayo-Stewart, Selkirk-Pelly, Carmacks, and White River areas. There were 1,400 Southern Tutchone in 1995, 200 of whom were fluent in their ancestral language, the youngest of them being between the ages of 40 and 50 years of age. They live in Southwestern Yukon's Whitehorse, Aishihik-Champagne-Klukwan, and Kluane-Burwash areas. Notwithstanding the customary separation between Northern and Southern Tutchone as distinct linguistically, I personally witnessed conversations between Northern and Southern Tutchone elders and I did not notice any signs of anyone having difficulties understanding anyone else. When I asked Mrs. Hall, a Northern Tutchone whose husband is a Southern Tutchone from Haishihik about this, she indicated that there are some noticeable differences between Northern and Southern Tutchone, but not to such an extent as to prevent mutual understanding. Nevertheless, linguists generally regard Southern and Northern Tutchone as two closely related, but distinct languages.

THE SELKIRK FIRST NATION IN 2006 (THROUGH THE EYES OF AN OUTSIDER)

It took a very long time, and there was a lot of hardship and grief along the way, but the descendents of the proud independent people who witnessed Robert Campbell and his crew land across the river from their traditional trading place in 1848 have once again achieved a measure of independence. But the world of today's Tutchone is very different from the world of Hanan and Thlinikik-thling. And no amount of wishful thinking will

ever erase the effects of more than two centuries of indirect and direct interactions with Europeans, Euro-Americans, Euro-Canadians, and, now increasingly, with the entire world. Indeed, the members of the Selkirk First Nation are now part of a global communications network that threatens to erase the differences between the centre and the periphery. A message originating in a cabin in Pelly Crossing can be sent via internet to everywhere on Earth just as easily as it can from anywhere. This means that a human group that only recently lived on the edge of one of the far margins of the planet is now no more marginal than anyone living anywhere else. It means that the very notions of "centre" and "periphery" are rapidly losing their significance. Unfortunately, the current crop of Tutchone leaders does not appear to have quite grasped this fact yet. But they should not be blamed for their lack of imagination or vision; they have pressing and immediate considerations to deal with.

A first visit to the Selkirk First Nation's government office can be intimidating, not because of any hostility on the part of the Tutchone, on the contrary, they are all very friendly. But for one used to the anonymity of southern cities, it is a novel experience to find oneself suddenly the object of everyone's attention. The first time I visited the SFN government office in Pelly Crossing, my first impression was of a large crowd hanging about in front of the main door. I had only taken a few steps away from my rental car toward the building's entrance when a young man sporting a wide smile stepped off the low porch and came toward me. Offering me his hand to shake, he asked if I was the man who hired workers for "the mine." There was such a hopeful air about him that I was truly sorry to have to disappoint

him, but my negative answer did not seem to bother him particularly. I wished him good luck and covered the five or six remaining steps to the front door. The crowd in front was almost entirely made up of young adult men and women. They were obviously very curious about who I was and the purpose of my visit, but all were too polite to ask.

Although I was never again asked if I hired workers for the mine, this scene was repeated each time I visited the SFN government office. If there is one thing that this crowd of able-bodied young adults milling aimlessly by the seat of their government graphically demonstrates, it is the glaring lack of employment for young Tutchone. It also points to the way that all hope rests with the new self-government. And there is no doubt that the SFN government is trying to reorganize things for the benefit of the people, but it is somewhat overwhelmed by the sheer size of the task to be accomplished. To quote a high-ranking non-Aboriginal Yukon official who shall remain anonymous, "the problem is that there are not ten able-bodied, fully literate adults in the entire nation!" (personal communication, Sept. 2006). Now this is manifestly incorrect as far as Northern Tutchone able bodied-ness is concerned, but there might be a small element of truth to the literacy part of the statement. And that almost all of those hanging around outside the SFN government office are young people is no more than to be expected in a population that's demographically among the youngest in the country. Clearly, all those idle young men and women ought to be put to work for the benefit of the nation. The difficulty is that most lack the necessary education.

Education is possibly the greatest challenge that the SFN government has to grapple with. To receive the kind of education that would properly

equip them to make a real contribution to “putting things right again,” young Tutchone would have to leave the community for extended periods of time because the nearest post-secondary education facility is located 285 kilometres away at Yukon College in Whitehorse. Not many do. And although Pelly Crossing boasts a Yukon College “campus,” this actually consists of a single small, decrepit, wholly inadequate building where students may receive a bit of help and tutoring in completing distance learning courses from one of the only two tutors available. Hardly the kind of education these young people would require to fully participate in the management of their community.

Aside from the fact that more managers are needed to effectively run the affairs of the Selkirk First Nation, there have been precious few local employment opportunities in Minto and Pelly Crossing until recently. This has meant that if a Tutchone man or woman wanted to find employment s/he has often had to leave the community. There are of course the traditional occupations of fishing, hunting and gathering in season. And virtually all SFN members of both genders and of all ages still routinely participate in such activities. When the salmon are spawning in the Pelly River, for example, the town is nearly deserted because almost everyone is out on the land (or, more accurately, on river side) catching and drying fish for later use. At such times even SFN government offices are virtually deserted. Unfortunately, although its contribution to the local economy is considerable and should not be underestimated, subsistence hunting and fishing contributes no cash to the local economy.

In Pelly Crossing, until recently, if one was not employed in a government job, one had little hope of finding remunerated employment. The elders, just as every other Canadian elder, receive federal government Old Age Pension cheques. Younger adults, if not gainfully employed, have had to resort to public welfare. An additional source of local employment, however, had recently materialised. Because of a significant increase in world base metal prices, a hard rock copper and gold open pit mine located on SFN-owned lands was reopened with the full approval and cooperation of the SFN government. Mrs. Lizzie Hall, whose own son, a carpenter, found employment at Minto Mines more than a year before its official opening, says that "that mine is good for the Northern Tutchone because it provides jobs for the young people" (personal communication, September 14, 2006). The actual mine was officially opened on October 1, 2007. Over a hundred guests and dignitaries, including SFN Chief Darin Isaac and several councillors and elders, attended the opening ceremony (Sherwood Copper Corp. news release, October 11, 2007). Just how many jobs actually went to SFN members is not clear at this time. The mine's new owners, Sherwood Copper has been cooperating with the Selkirk First Nation and it is to be hoped that SFN representatives have been able to negotiate as many jobs as possible, as well as adequate royalties for the ore that was exported to China via the (relatively) nearby Alaskan port of Skagway (the very same Alaskan port whence Klondike gold was formerly exported). According to Sherwood Copper's President and CEO Stephen Quinn, Minto Mines has proven ore reserves for full production over six years and the company's exploration crews have recently discovered several more promising ore deposits nearby

on the very property on which the current mine stands (Quinn, October 30, 2007). As past Yukon history has repeatedly demonstrated, however, it is well to keep in mind that the future of Sherwood Copper and Minto Mines, together with that of any royalties for the Selkirk First Nation and mine jobs for Tutchone workers all depend upon continuing high world base metal prices. In 2009, with most of the world's economies now officially in recession and base metal prices dropping precipitously, it is unlikely that Minto Mine will continue operations much longer (though rising gold prices may have an overall positive effect). Ever since the days of the Klondike Gold Rush, Yukon's has consistently been a boom and bust mining economy. The pattern continues.

YUKON ABORIGINALS' CONCEPT OF HISTORY

According to Catharine McClelland, Yukon Aboriginals have little interest in time or space in the Western sense of those terms. Their units of measurement for either are relatively imprecise. "A long time ago... may refer either to early myth time, or to an event as recent as five or six years before the present" (1975, 70). Similarly, "a long way away" may designate a location several hundred kilometres away or somewhere much closer. It often depends upon the mode of locomotion one imagines would be used to travel the distance referred to, though not always. And while myth or story time is generally thought to refer to a time before the immediate ancestors of people living today were still living, it is by no means excluded that the type of event that occurs in story time could happen even today, though this is thought to

be rare. Yukon Aboriginals' sense of historical time is also somewhat relative with events being dated as having occurred "at the time of the Gold Rush," or "before the white man came," and very ancient events as having taken place "long, long ago." McClelland found her informants had "little interest in designating a definite time when the world began. Southern Tutchone and Tagish informants were puzzled and slightly irritated when I asked when the creator Crow had first appeared, where he had come from, and how it was that if Crow made people, he had a human mother, as some declared he had" (ibid. 71). (I feel compelled to point out that McClelland may be somewhat disingenuous here, for she should surely know that, according to most Tutchone storytellers, crow had been around a long time before the day that he had his spirit reincarnated through a virgin as part of his successful strategy to steal the sun away from the girl's father who had selfishly kept it to himself, and she furthermore also ought to know that the virgin in question was not human but a fish, lake trout or salmon.) Aboriginals' concept of the future appears to also be somewhat undetermined. According to McClelland, Native Yukonners' relatively fluctuating sense of time is most likely due to their belief in endless reincarnations:

For the most part then, southern Yukon Indians are content to focus on the present and most immediate future, satisfied that events from myth time sufficiently explain the present world, and secure in the thought of endless reincarnations in the time to come. It is this last factor, indeed, bringing together the past and the future, which probably helps to produce an amorphous sense of time quite different from our own (ibid. 72).

It is perhaps this sense of endless time stretching both before and after the present lifetime, coupled with the certainty of a never-ending cycle of lifetimes in the past and in the future that most clearly distinguish Yukon Aboriginals' view of history from its Western counterpart. Because humans

have lived and will live an endless number of lifetimes, any events occurring during an individual's lifetime or even events occurring over several successive lifetimes are relatively unimportant when measured against this kind of cosmic time scale. This might perhaps be most fruitfully illustrated by juxtaposing the vast geological timescale spanning billions of years that scientists use to measure the appearance and the continuing development of life on Earth with the way that non-Aboriginal historians measure historical phenomena on the time scale of a documented human history going back a mere four thousand years.

TRADITIONAL STORIES AS HISTORY

Julie Cruikshank writes that she had originally expected that by recording Yukon Aboriginals' life's histories, she would at the same time be recording oral history, and though all of her informants collaborated briefly with her in the way that she had expected, all of them rapidly shifted to "more important" traditional narrative (1990, 14). According to Cruikshank, all the Aboriginal narrators that she collaborated with moreover insisted that life's story narratives and traditional narratives are equally true, equally meaningful, and together form an integral whole. As a young anthropologist in Yukon in the 1970s, Cruikshank asked Elder Angela Sidney to "teach her" about her culture. She was also interested in the social history that had affected indigenous people in northwestern Canada, and so she asked Mrs. Sidney questions about the Klondike Gold Rush and the building of the Alaska Highway. To her initial dismay, Mrs. Sidney responded with seemingly

unrelated traditional stories—"perhaps one about a boy who stayed with salmon people, or a girl who married a star, or one about the woman stolen by Grizzly" (1998, 36). One of the stories that Mrs. Sidney told Cruikshank and others repeatedly was the story of Kaax'achgóok, a famous ancestor whose adventures parallel those of Ulysses, the Ancient Greek hero. To illustrate how a story can serve a multitude of purposes, Cruikshank lists some of the uses that Mrs. Sidney makes of the Kaax'achgóok narrative. Some of these include providing an Aboriginal explanation for socio-historical events and suggesting ways of coming to terms with emotionally charged events from the past. As Cruikshank points out, such a story can be "read" in a variety of ways. For example, because the hero, stranded at sea on a remote uninhabited island, devises a navigational method based on the sun's position at the summer solstice, the narrative could be seen as designed for teaching would-be sailors navigation. Because of its structural parallel with the *Odyssey*, it can also be read as a powerful epic narrative. It might even be read as a historical narrative if, say, Kaax'achgóok's journey can be traced back to a known historical figure. But such a list doesn't come close to exhausting the possibilities, for, as Cruikshank points out, there is much more than just literature, or history, or navigational pedagogy in this type of story. She writes that she would have seen the Kaax'achgóok story as just one more "fine example of oral narrative from northwestern North America, had Mrs. Sidney not repeatedly referred to it again" (ibid.).

Mrs. Sidney first heard the story from her aunt when she was 10-years-old. She then heard her father tell it to her brothers. She first told it in 1945 when her son returned from Europe where he'd served as a soldier for

five long years. She thought that it was an appropriate story to tell at the feast that she gave upon his return. To her, it is a story of hope during dark days. In her narrative, when things are at their bleakest, Kaax'achgóok dreams that he's home: "I gave up hope, then I dreamed I was home" (ibid. 32). The recollection of this story was what gave Mrs. Sidney the strength to endure her son's long absence. But Mrs. Sidney's use of this story does not end there: in 1974 she told Cruikshank the same story as a preliminary step to the recording of her own life's history. And she told it again in 1988 before a mixed audience of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals when she was invited to speak at the inauguration of Yukon College. "The reason I sang that song," she told Cruikshank, "is because that Yukon College is going to be like the Sun for the students. Instead of going to Vancouver or Victoria, they're going to be able to stay here and go to school here. We're not going to lose our kids anymore. It's going to be like the sun for them, just like for that Kaax'achgóok" (ibid. 40).

HOW THE CULTURE OF THE TUTCHONE IS INFORMED BY COLONIAL CONTACT AND HOW THIS HAS AFFECTED THE TUTCHONE APPROACH TO STORYTELLING

Throughout his life Tommy McGinty had to deal as best he could with the European culture's onslaught upon his own. Accordingly, even though

North American Indian creation narratives are supposed to refer to the beginning of time and not realities which have obviously been brought about in the last few centuries by the coming of Europeans to America...Mr. McGinty's version of the Tutchone Genesis does address issues linked to the arrival of Europeans (Legros 1999, 16).

The world described in the crow stories that Tommy McGinty inherited from his ancestors differed in fundamental ways from the world that he found himself in. There had been no European invaders in that earlier world, no Christian preachers and no outboard motors or submarines, no one had ever spoken of a man-god named Jesus who was born of a virgin mother named Mary. One of the problems for Mr. McGinty was finding a way of bridging the gap between those two worlds. His solution was to embed new components into his version of the story that shows how it already included "all European ideas and concepts (submarines, motor boats, Jesus, Virgin Mary, socio-cultural changes)" (ibid. 24-5). This is possible because traditional Aboriginal oral narratives such as the Tutchone story of crow are not static. They evolve over time to reflect changing socio-cultural/environmental conditions in which the people whose narrative it is find themselves. This points to one of the most fundamental differences between oral and written foundation narratives; while the former evolve over time, the latter, once written down tend to change little over lengthy periods. In other words, the written format is far less adaptable than the oral.

When Tommy McGinty tells Dominique Legros (Legros 1999, 75-82) how crow once gathered a bundle of firewood, cooking stones and a birch-bark cooking pan and then tricked a giant sucker fish into swimming right up to the shore of a lake and convinced it to open its mouth wide enough for him to jump inside and make his way down the fish's gullet, through its digestive system down into its viscera that he finds encased in fat, pieces of which he cuts off, cooks and eats so much of that he gets diarrhoea and has to go to the back of the fish to relieve himself through its anal opening, he explains

that crow has no difficulty breathing inside of his fleshy submarine because there is always plenty of air from the fish's own breathing in there. Once he's eaten all the fat, crow notices how fat the fish's heart is. He cuts the whole heart off and cooks that too. But without its heart the fish begins to die. It starts to swim erratically, this way and that, and crow is tossed about inside the slippery cavity. Crow tells that fish that since it's going to die, it might as well swim directly to the nearest large town and jump right up on the shore, which the fish does just as it's dying. But now that the fish is dead and no longer breathing, there is less and less air inside of it and crow begins to suffocate, but soon he hears people who have gathered around the dead fish and have begun to butcher it. Then someone cuts a hole between two ribs and the people see some sort of black thing shoot out between those ribs; they don't know it, but that was crow flying out of that fish's gut. The story, as told by Mr. McGinty, does not end there, but I've already paraphrased it sufficiently to show why he argues that it was crow who invented submarines, and that this story also demonstrates how people can work deep underground in mines by pumping fresh air down through pipes.

In another story told by Tommy McGinty (Legros 1999, 135-140), crow is drifting down the river in a boat. He comes to where a side river flows into the river he is on. There's a small town where the two rivers meet. The people there tell crow that when some of them go up the side river, they never come back. They think that something, somewhere up that river, is eating them. Crow decides to investigate, but first, he makes himself a new boat out of sand and gravel that he urinates on and it is this combination of sand and gravel together with crow's urine that makes the boat solid. Crow

then makes himself a long paddle and shoves off in his new sand boat. All crow has to do is give one stroke of the paddle to propel his boat clear across the river. "Crow has got only a paddle—he doesn't use poles or anything else. His mind does all the work... His mind makes everything move like nothing... You know, just like a motor boat. Now you see: that's the way the Whiteman got the speedboat too. He got it from crow. Crow made it first..." says Tommy McGinty (Legros 1999, 136). With such a good boat and especially with such a wonderful propelling system, it doesn't take him long to make his way up that side stream and spot someone spying on him from a cliff top. Suddenly, the watcher is gone. Crow suspects that that man is now going to jump into his own boat and paddle down river and attack him as he rounds the next bend, so he just pulls up into an eddy and waits for the man to come to him. Just as crow predicted the man does come around the bend; he's got a big knife and he's swinging that knife as he's closing in on crow. It's obvious that he's intent on killing him. He's *tr'o*, the horsefly, but he's also a man at the same time—"His name is *tr'o*. Whiteman say you call it horsefly. But at that time *tr'o* was a man and a horsefly, back and forth. Not like nowadays, just a horsefly," says Mr. McGinty (ibid.). But crow is a good talker. He manages to calm the horsefly man and talks him into racing their boats across the river. Crow of course, wins hands down with his *zhäak*-propelled power boat. The horsefly is impressed and when crow suggests they trade boats, he's all for it. So they exchange boats and crow tells horsefly to try the boat out. Horsefly is delighted to find that the boat works just as well for him as it does for crow. But, as Mrs. Lizzie Hall once said to me, "He's a tricky one, that crow!" He "starts to medicine-talk to his sand boat: 'My boat just

sink right down... Turn back to sand and gravel. Go down into the water. My boat go down all the way” (McGinty in Legros 1999, 139). The boat sinks, and horsefly goes down with it. Then he pops back up briefly, but he can’t swim so he goes down once more. Crow has the horsefly’s boat now, and when they exchanged boats the horsefly forgot to take his big knife into the sand boat with him so now crow’s also got his knife. He paddles over to where horsefly is drowning. He tells him that he’s going to save him, but instead he grabs him by the hair, pulls him up just enough for horsefly’s neck to rest on the gunwale and using horsefly’s own knife, he cuts his throat and slices his head off. “That’s why nowadays the horsefly’s head can turn pretty near right around all the way,” says Tommy McGinty (ibid.).

And this is how Tommy McGinty makes Jesus and the Virgin Mary an integral part of the crow story:

See, crow already knew about being born again. He had done it before; when he had got that kid to steal the sun. You remember. He put his spirit into the lake trout’s daughter’s cup. That was like a little piece of dirt. She drank it. This way, crow’s spirit went inside the girl and she got a big stomach. Then she made that little baby even though she never met any man yet. Just like Virgin Mary. And that’s the way the little Jesus was born too—from crow’s spirit who was born again. That’s why the old timers say that crow’s story is the Bible story. And when some Indian or some Whiteman is born again through some woman, that’s also because crow has done that before them, through the trout’s daughter and through Virgin Mary.

From there this story split out. That’s the way this story ends. After crow made this land he went outside and was born again through Virgin Mary as Jesus. And Jesus preached pretty near all over the world but not here, not in this Indian country. After he left it, way after, that’s the little beaver man that came up here. And this beaver man cleaned this land from all kinds of bad animals. I’ll tell this story at another time. It’s a different one.

It must be that crow, after the Whiteman suffered him on the cross as Jesus, went to the sun for good. That’s where all the dead people go when they don’t want to be born again into some other new life on this land here.

Tl’aku! (Tommy McGinty as transposed in Legros 1999, 178).

Tommy McGinty’s equating crow the creator with the Christian Jesus is a common theme among Tutchone storytellers. In an episode of the crow

story told to Catharine McClelland by Jessie Allen of Klukshu in 1954, the narrator “demonstrates her great concern to equate Crow with God or Jesus by stressing Crow’s ‘virgin birth’ and his role as the creator of the world” (McClelland 2007, 100, 106). And in 1948, also at Klukshu, Johnny Fraser told McClelland, “Old crow made the world. And he gets the sun and the moon. Jesus is born in a manger; Crow born in the moss; made it out for the poor people” (ibid. 22).

When crow sends his spirit into a virgin’s cup of water, just as when he somehow sends his spirit into the Virgin Mary inside of whose womb he grows into the baby Jesus, he does it with his zhäak, or “with his doctor”, to put it as Tutchone elders would in English. Similarly, when he invents the submarine, and especially when he invents the power boat, Mr. McGinty makes it clear that crow does it with his zhäak. That he equates crow’s long paddle with outboard motors, suggests that he sees crow’s paddle and the outboard motor as both essentially devices of power or zhäak. It could be argued that for a man like Tommy McGinty, who never learned to read or write (Legros 1999, 23), a modern invention such as the outboard motor must have appeared powerful indeed. But such an argument misses the essential point that as illiterate as he might have been, Tommy McGinty used power boats throughout his life. He was intimately familiar with marine engines and routinely repaired his own when he had to. He understood the functioning of the internal combustion engine very well (probably much better than do many Euro-Canadians). That he should equate crow’s zhäak with modern inventions points to the way that for Mr. McGinty and his contemporaries, the world is still a place of power; and this power or zhäak is manifested

everywhere and in everything from animals and mountains to the internal combustion engine. It is perhaps this that Tommy McGinty's descendants stand to lose most as their world switches willy-nilly from the oral to the written: this sense of the world as a place of zhäak or power.

FROM ORALITY TO LITERACY IN ONE GENERATION

In *The Empire Writes Back*, Bill Ashcroft, Garret Griffiths and Helen Tiffin argue that,

The introduction of writing into these [oral] societies leads to the development of a different kind of consciousness which might be characterized as 'historical'²⁸. Thus literacy and writing, as JanMohammed notes, by recording particular facts and so making available in time a dense and specific past 'will not allow memory, the major mode of temporal mediation in oral cultures, to eliminate facts that are not consonant with or useful for contemporary needs'. Literacy, he argues, 'also destroys the immediacy of personal experience and the deeper socialisation of the world and consequently the totalising nature of oral cultures'. Thus literacy leads to the development of historic consciousness. It allows scrutiny of a fixed past. It enables distinctions to be made between truth and error and so permits the development of 'a more conscious, critical, and comparative attitude to the accepted world picture'. (Though, of course, we need to note that history as an institution is itself under the control of determinate cultural and ideological forces which may seek to propose the specific practice of history as neutral and objective.) Literacy, then, eventually produces 'a sense of change, of the human past as an objective reality available to causal analysis, and of history as a broad attempt to determine reality in every (diachronic) area of human concern (1989, 81-2).

Tommy McGinty could neither read nor write, but that did not prevent him from serving as Chief of the Selkirk First Nation, and neither did it prevent him from becoming one of the foremost storytellers of his generation. And if he and his wife had been allowed to have their way, his own children

²⁸ Note that my own interactions with Aboriginals who have been forcibly made literate in residential schools prompt me to suggest that the kind of shift in consciousness that Ashcroft et al. describe probably seldom if ever occurs in a single generation and may well require several. I further suggest that considerably more research needs to be done to properly test Ashcroft et al.'s hypothesis.

would have probably grown up without going to school like their parents (Legros 1999, 257). But they did not and their children were forcibly educated into the Western culture's literate system. As the practical man that he obviously was, Mr. McGinty seems to have reasoned that since his descendants were bound to be literate then one potential way of passing his traditional knowledge on to them was by having his telling of the crow story written into a book. When he told the story of crow, Tommy McGinty was not only telling an important part of the history of his people, he was also communicating a large part of the wisdom accumulated by the Tutchone nation over millennia. Now that his version of it has been written down in a book, will his descendants continue to renew and update that story as their ancestors have done since time immemorial, or will they treat it as we do some of our own foundation narratives such as, say, Homer's *Odyssey*, an endless source of literary inspiration to be sure, but for most of us hardly relevant to the everyday world that we live in now? That, of course, is for the Tutchone First Nation people to decide for themselves.

CHAPTER 3: THE TWO STATES OF TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1984 TEXT

The two states of Tommy McGinty's texts of the Northern Tutchone's story of crow were produced in the course of his collaboration with Dominique Legros. We'll begin with his first recorded textualization, i.e., his first recorded²⁹ narration in Northern Tutchone as taped by anthropologist Dominique Legros on August 5 and 6, 1984, before discussing his second textualization, i.e., his own translation of his own first recorded Northern Tutchone text into English, also taped by Dominique Legros some time in August 1984. But first, I will define what I mean by terms and phrases such as "text", "state of text", "transcription" and "textualization".

In an attempt to come to terms with what distinguishes an instance of verbal production by a Native American and a text representing such a verbal production, William M. Clements writes, "I believe that one represents the other" (1996, 7). For him, a speech act that is not recorded in writing cannot be called a text. Such a speech act is simply a one-time "verbalization" because, "Unlike a written text, it cannot be reexamined or enjoyed again" (ibid. 6). Clements notes that traditional definitions of text "equate it simply with a written (or printed) record of the linguistic component of discourse. [...]" Applied specifically to oral expression, textualization becomes what Bauman and Briggs call 'entextualization': 'the process of rendering discourse

²⁹ Please note that my use of the word "first" is not meant in any way to imply that this is the very first time the story of crow was ever told, but simply that this was the first of several nearly complete tellings of the crow story cycle by Tommy McGinty that Dr. Legros recorded. As I will show, this and related traditional stories are widespread among North-American and Siberian Aboriginals and any hypothetical "first", in the sense of the first time any version of that story was ever told, is lost in the mists of time.

extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit—a text—that can be lifted out of its interactional setting' (1990: 73)" (ibid. 7). If I read him correctly, Clements defines *text* as a written reproduction or record of a stretch of linguistic production that can be "reexamined or enjoyed again" outside of its original context of occurrence, and he defines *textualization* as the process of selecting a "stretch of linguistic production" and making it representable by means of signs on paper that can be examined or enjoyed in contexts that differ from the original context of its occurrence.

My own definitions of the same terms largely coincide with Clements' except that my definition of *text* is broader than his in that I do not restrict its meaning to representations of stretches of linguistic production in writing on paper or some such recording medium. In my view, the word *text*, as it applies to Aboriginal verbal production also refers to a disc, tape or digital memory device upon which the sounds or the sounds and images of a stretch of linguistic production has been recorded. My reasoning is this: like Clements, I hold that an oral utterance that goes unrecorded in any way cannot be called a text because it becomes nothing more than a memory as soon as it is over and it therefore can never be recalled to mind with 100% accuracy (even though it can, albeit subject to the vagaries of memory, be "reexamined or enjoyed again"). This is precisely what distinguishes a text from a once only oral utterance; while the former can be called back to mind, enjoyed again, re-examined and even reproduced with 100% accuracy, the latter remains forever subject to the vagaries of fallible human memory. And if I moreover argue that sound recordings and sound and images recordings are also texts in their own right it is because I hold them to be more complete

and literally more accurate reproductions of the oral utterance that they represent than written only recordings of the same utterances can ever be. For example, aside from the obvious differences in medium, the only major difference between a recording in writing only by Catharine McClelland and Frederica de Laguna of Southern Yukon and Alaska Aboriginals' traditional stories and a recording on either audiocassettes or videocassettes by Dominique Legros of Central Yukon Aboriginals' traditional stories is that Legros' are more accurate and complete. McClelland's written record is only as accurate and complete as her hastily jotted down notes during the narration and the accuracy of her memory at the time of final transcription allow, whereas Legros' audio and video cassettes capture, not only each and every word that Tommy McGinty utters, but his tone of voice, hesitations, repetitions, intermittent stammering and throat clearing and his spitting tobacco juice into a tin can every few minutes, not to mention audience response; and Legros' videocassettes are not only just as auditorily accurate but record considerably more information besides, including, but not limited to, physical context, body language, facial expressions and gestures. Because of this, Legros' audio and video texts are more accurate and complete than a mere written text can ever be. Original sound and image recordings are thus more reliable as objects for research because they are primary sources—the next best thing to being there in person—while a written representation (such as McClelland's and de Laguna's that are not based on a prior sound recording, mediated as they are by the ethnographer's sense and memory of what is important enough to be recorded in writing is in fact a secondary source. In the same way, I expand

upon Clements' definition of *textualization* to include not only the process of selecting a stretch of linguistic production and making a representation of it in written form, but the process of recording the actual sound or the actual sound and images of a stretch of linguistic production as well.

In this document, therefore, the word *text* refers to any encoded (by means of signs on paper or by means of sounds or sounds and images encoded on tape, disc or digital memory device available for multiple playbacks) representation of a stretch or stretches of linguistic production that can be re-examined, enjoyed again or reproduced with 100% accuracy. In this document, moreover, the word *textualization* refers to the process of selecting one or several stretches of linguistic production and making a representation of it or them by means of writing or by means of a sound or sound and images recording, thus making it or them available for examination or enjoyment in contexts that differ from the original context of its or their occurrence. Furthermore, the phrase *state of text* refers to any specific version (written or recorded as sound or as sound and images) of a given text. And, finally, in this document, the word *transcription* refers to a verbatim written representation of the sound portion of a pre-existing sound or sound and images recording of one or several stretches of linguistic production.

TEXT 1: TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1984 NORTHERN TUTCHONE NARRATION

Dominique Legros recorded Tommy McGinty telling the story of crow, in whole or in part, on at least seven separate occasions (to my knowledge).

McGinty's first known recorded partial telling in Tutchone took place July 25 and 26, 1984. He was subsequently recorded narrating a single episode called "crow kills the devil" in Tutchone on August 2, 1984³⁰. Legros then recorded Tommy McGinty retelling what Legros then called "the long story of how the world was made [by Ts'ehki or crow]"³¹ in Tutchone on August 5 and 6, 1984. This is the telling that both publications of the crow story (in English and in French) are primarily based upon³². This is why I consider this August 5 and 6, 1984 recorded narration of the cycle in Northern Tutchone as the first state of the text of Tommy McGinty's story of crow.

Tommy McGinty was born some time in the late 1910's—most probably in 1915 or 1916 (Selkirk Development Corporation 2000)—of a crow moiety mother. As he approached puberty, his parents, Suzie and Peter McGinty found him increasingly difficult to handle. This moved young Tommy's grandfather, Copper Joe, to offer to take over the boy's upbringing. The parents agreed and the boy went to live with Copper Joe, who gave him a traditional Tutchone education. Copper Joe, who was born some time around 1850 and had once served as chief of the Selkirk First Nation, was already an elder at that time and was widely recognised by his peers as one

³⁰ Dominique Legros did not include this episode in either his English or his French publications of Tommy McGinty's story of crow because, though he allows that according to all available evidence this narrative is of ancient origin and is known and told by virtually all Pelly Crossing's storytellers, "they always tell this story as a separate episode and never seek to integrate this segment into the main cycle" (Legros 1999, 243).

³¹ At the very start of the first of the three audio-cassettes on which he recorded Tommy McGinty's August 5 and 6, 1984 Northern Tutchone narration, Dominique Legros identifies the sequence with the following words: "Dominique Legros speaking, and Tommy McGinty is going to tell the long story of how the world was made, and after how, what Ts'ehk'i did in the world."

³² Although some parts of Dominique Legros' published texts of the crow story are entirely based upon Mr. McGinty's 1991 narration (because he did not tell that particular episode in 1984), he acknowledges that in matters of sequence he relied primarily on the 1984 version (1999, 242) and that whenever possible the overall content is a fusion of both versions (1999, 211-229).

of the most knowledgeable in the community. He was also a shaman of high renown. He knew all the traditional stories and the traditional laws as proclaimed by crow at the beginning of time. He also knew all the rules of respect owed each and every animal so as to please it enough that it would willingly expose itself to his hunting weapons, thereby ensuring that he and his dependants would not want for food. He knew the Tutchone language as it was spoken before the arrival of the first Europeans in Northern Tutchone country. He was also well versed in the high language traditionally used by the best Tutchone orators. He was moreover an expert in Tutchone traditional names for geographical places and features, and in traditional herbal medicine. He knew what kind of rigorous training was traditionally used to make a boy into a skilled hunter and old-time warrior. In short, he was among the greatest living experts in what it takes and what it means to be a traditional Northern Tutchone man. And this he did all in his power to pass on to his grandson Tommy. Since he lived to a ripe old age (he is believed to have been over a hundred years old when he died in the late 1940s or early 1950s), he had plenty of time to succeed at this goal since Tommy McGinty was a full-grown man in his 30s when Copper Joe passed away. It was during his 20s, when he was a deckhand on Yukon River sternwheelers, that Tommy McGinty acquired his somewhat eccentric version of the English language. In middle age, Mr. McGinty served as chief of the Selkirk First Nation, an honour and duty that his eldest daughter Lucy also assumed in due course (Legros 1999, 251-260). In 1977 Tommy McGinty co-authored (in collaboration with linguist John Ritter and fellow

Northern Tutchone Johnson Edwards) *The Selkirk Indian Language*
(Northern Tutchone) *Noun Dictionary*.

MAKING A RECORD FOR THOSE WHO WOULD COME AFTER

Those who are not familiar with Northern Tutchone culture might suggest that Tommy McGinty may have collaborated with Dominique Legros because Legros was paying him to do so, but they would thus betray their ignorance of the Northern Tutchone custom of reciprocity according to which whenever one person does something for another, that other person must reciprocate by doing something in return. This can be an appropriate gift, a service rendered or, in the absence of anything more suitable, money might serve³³. The fact that he was getting paid, therefore, is not likely to have been the most significant incentive for Tommy McGinty, who would only have taken Dominique Legros' money because this was the only acceptable gift that the anthropologist had to give him in accordance with the all important reciprocity custom.

According to Dominique Legros, Mr. McGinty often expressed the wish that the story of crow be recorded and written down for the education of future Northern Tutchone youth and children. This rings all the more true that this remains a very important goal for both of Mr. McGinty's daughters as well as for Lizzie Hall, his matrilineal niece. During one of the many interviews I

³³ This reciprocity custom was widespread among North American First Nations. Early fur traders first interpreted such exchanges as purely commercial activities; however, the elaborately ritualistic ceremonies that always attended such exchanges, ceremonies that Europeans had no choice but to participate in, are unmistakable evidence that these were far more than merely commercial. The potlatch ceremonial is a closely related custom, though in the potlatch the reciprocity may be delayed for several years.

had with her over the summer and fall of 2006³⁴, Mrs. Hall told me of an incident that took place mere days before Mr. McGinty's death. That day, when she looked down towards the Pelly River that flows directly in front of her house, she spotted her uncle Tommy standing by the water's edge. Something in his stance made her think that something wasn't quite right. She climbed down the bank and stood behind him. "What's wrong, uncle?" she asked. When he turned to face her she saw that he was crying. "I think he died of a broken heart," Mrs. Hall confided to me. She thinks he died of a broken heart because of what he told her that day. He said that he'd spent the last several years of his life doing all he possibly could to pass on traditional Northern Tutchone culture to the younger generations and yet he'd lately come to believe that all his efforts had been in vain because the young people didn't seem interested in what he had to teach them. It is clear that one of the things that Tommy McGinty cared most about, at least in the last years of his life, was ensuring that the generations of Northern Tutchone to come after him receive a solid grounding in traditional Northern Tutchone values and customs. It is virtually certain, therefore, that when he sat down in front of Dominique Legros' tape recorder to narrate the story of crow in his native language a full decade before his niece found him crying and thoroughly discouraged on the shore of the Pelly River, he must have done so in the hope that the content of this recording would somehow make its way into the ears of as many as possible of the members of all generations of Northern Tutchone to come after him. This is amply corroborated by his

³⁴ Although our "official" working sessions took place in early July and mid-September, we also met several times in Pelly Crossing and once in Whitehorse, either as a courtesy call on my part or to negotiate arrangements for the "official" sessions.

performance for the Yukon College courses, seven years later, in which his every word and gesture are explicitly designed to educate young Tutchone men and women about their traditional values and customs (or “laws,” as McGinty himself prefers to put it). And it is no accident that he so often chose to tell the story of crow, for that story is the very embodiment of traditional Northern Tutchone laws, values and customs.

THE RECORDED NORTHERN TUTCHONE TEXT

The Northern Tutchone’s founding narrative, the story of crow, is one of many related founding narratives of several Aboriginal nations. All have a similar raven trickster/creator as their main character. But if he is the powerful individual who restored the world, the raven is never revered as a god in the Western sense of that word. It is true that he does live in myth or story time and that he is at once an ordinary raven and a human being. But there is nothing unusual about that since most beings living in story time share precisely the same attribute—a gopher is a gopher but also a man; the horsefly, as we saw in Chapter 2, is a man as well, and so on. And not only is the raven not a god, he’s not even immortal. He can be, and does get killed, just like any other being, though his spirit, like all spirits, is immortal and available for reincarnation from the moment he dies—unless, as Tommy McGinty explains at the very end of an episode entitled “Indians get to be too many for crow” (1999, 173-178) that he only told in 1991, it becomes weary of this endless round of reincarnations and opts to dwell in the sun with the other spirits who have chosen not to be reborn any more.

TOMMY MCGINTY'S NORTHERN TUTCHONE STORY OF CROW

Chronologically, Tommy McGinty's story of crow begins, like many related founding narratives, with a universal flood. But that does not mean that these stories are always told in the same order. Individual episodes are often told with no reference to the rest of the cycle (Legros 1999, 34). Any given episode is moreover not always told in its entirety; an aspect that may be emphasized at one telling may not even be mentioned at all at another. The full cycle is probably never told at once, and any telling may start at any point and the episodes may be told in any order the teller chooses for any given telling (*ibid.* 237-47). Dominique Legros' 1999 textualization follows the order of the episodes told in Mr. McGinty's 1984 recorded Northern Tutchone text, but as Legros states, this is arbitrary; had he heard McGinty's 1991 version first, this may well have become Mr. McGinty's baseline text in his eyes and he would have followed the (different) 1991 chronology in his own textualization (*ibid.* 242). This is one of the reasons why, even though he followed McGinty's 1984 chronology, Legros nevertheless inserted several episodes that were only told in 1991 into his 1999 textualization, in positions that he selected in consultation with Tommy McGinty (personal communication). Finally, note that the following summary of the Northern Tutchone story of crow is based upon the version that appears in Legros 1999, itself a synthesis of at least three separate recorded tellings by Tommy McGinty (and some further additions by Legros that I will discuss in detail in my analysis of Legros' 1999 textualization in Chapter 4), and not a summary

of Mrs. Lizzie Hall's translation of Tommy McGinty's 1984 Tutchone language text.

THE FLOOD

Crow, who knows a flood is coming, kills and skins a sandpiper and a small duck. Then it rains without stop until the earth is entirely flooded. Crow has no choice but to fly up and keep flying until he spots the top of a hill that's still above water. He lands and puts on the sandpiper's skin and, as the water keeps rising, he lets himself float up to the sky where he sticks his long pointy sandpiper beak through a star hole for breath. When the water starts going down he puts on the duck skin and floats around until, finding it too stuffy, he removes it and flies off.

CROW REBUILDS THE WORLD

He spots a tiny rock sticking out of the water with a mother seal and her young sleeping on top. He flies in, grabs the baby seal and threatens to steal it unless its mother dives down to the bottom to retrieve some of the old earth. She brings up rocks, soil, trees, sand and even whole sandbars with driftwood on them. When Crow's satisfied he's got enough he gives her back her baby. Then he arranges the pieces together, medicine-thinking as he works, telling them to glue together. Then he jumps over them with joined feet. The effect is like flattening out a ball of dough with a rolling pin, says

Tommy McGinty (Legros 1999, 49). Pretty soon crow's got the entire world covered with land. It's like a giant ball³⁵.

CROW MAKES THE LAKES AND RIVERS

He's thirsty and hungry, but there's neither fresh water to drink nor food to eat anywhere. He walks and walks until he comes upon *Tuundye* (osprey) guarding a small fresh water hole that's full of fish. Crow tries to befriend him; he calls him "brother in law"³⁶, but *Tuundye* refuses to share so crow devises a plan to take the water and the fish away from him. He lies down and goes to sleep. When he wakes he tells *Tuundye* that he dreamt that a war is coming. Me, I'm going to die, he says, but when that war comes, *Tuundye*, you better run away or they'll kill you. Then he flies off into the bush where he makes an army of *t'ots'ya'* or hawks out of leaves, and a small owl that he calls *kushekok* or nephew. Then he goes back to *Tuundye* and asks for water again. *Tuundye* refuses. So crow pretends to die. Soon, *kushekok* comes and starts hollering "my uncle, my uncle!" (ibid. 55). The *t'ots'ya'* hear him and start making an awful racket, breaking branches and trampling brush. *Tuundye* becomes scared and runs off. Crow "comes back to life" and sticks his head into the water hole and swallows all the water and fish he can. Then he flies off. Now and then he spits out a bit of water and it becomes a lake in

³⁵ In his 1991 Yukon College version, Mr. McGinty adds that a big wind comes up and blows some of the land apart with large stretches of salt water in between and that's how the continents came to be.

³⁶ "El'e" or "brother-in-law" is the correct term for a Tutchone man to call another his own age of the opposite moiety that he wants to be friends with. If of the same moiety he would call him older or younger brother as the case may be (Lizzie Hall, personal communication; Dominique Legros, personal communication)—note that "El'e" is Mrs. Hall's spelling; other variants exist.

which he drops a male and a female fish. Then he scratches out the course of rivers in the earth with a stick³⁷.

CROW'S FANCY NEW BLANKET

Crow has an old gopher-skin blanket. He wishes for a new one. Then, as he walks along a lakeshore, he spots a new one hanging from the bushes. He tosses his old blanket into the lake and puts on that fancy blanket. But it gets caught in the brush and is torn to bits. Crow angrily throws it away and goes back for his old one. But it's too far out and too deep to retrieve easily. He cuts a long pole, leaving a short length of limb on the end as a hook. He pokes that hooked pole down into the depths ahead of him. He has to go so far out that only the tip of his beak remains above the water before he finally manages to retrieve his old blanket. He wrings it out and starts off once more. But he soon spots another, even finer-looking blanket, also hanging from the bushes. He puts a rock in his old blanket and tosses it in the lake, but only a little way. He's a fast learner, that crow. But he doesn't get far before that blanket is torn to shreds too. He has no choice but to go back and fish out his old blanket once more. He was fooled by those blanket-like sheets of sand, mud, leaves, twigs and assorted debris you often find along the shores of large Yukon lakes.

³⁷ At this point in his textualization as published in the Canadian Museum of Civilization's *Mercury Series*, Dominique Legros inserts a very short episode that he entitles "A second flood comes" (Legros 1999, 59-60). As Lizzie Hall's sentence by sentence translation clearly shows, however, this episode does not figure in Mr. McGinty's 1984 Northern Tutchone text. That Legros should have included several episodes that did not figure in the text of McGinty's 1984 telling is not at all surprising in light of his own statement that he strove throughout the textualization process to ensure that he lost as little as possible of any event or information contained in each instance of [McGinty's] telling [of the crow story] (1999, 227-8).

CROW CATCHES A FISH

He spots a fish out on the lake. He picks up a small white rock and holds it in front of his chest, saying, "Look at this little white thing, it's good fat, I'm going to eat it." The fish jumps and hits crow in the chest, knocking him out almost like he had a heart attack. The fish wiggles back into the water. When crow comes to, he's more determined than ever to get that fish. He grabs a stick and stands further away from the water before teasing it again. The fish takes a tremendous leap and knocks crow down again, but he stands right back up, and before that fish has time to wiggle back into the water, crow clubs it to death. He walks into the trees and builds a fire at the foot of a fallen tree's upturned roots. He hangs his fish on the end of a stick stuck into the ground by the fire. Then he gets a silly idea. He says, "Root, you wish for that fish I cooked here? O.K., I wish you eat it" (ibid. 67). The root falls over top of the fish, leaving only the tip of its tail sticking out. Crow pulls on it and it comes off, but that's all he gets and there's no meat at all on it, so crow's foolishness makes him lose his meal and he has to go hungry.

CROW GETS MARRIED

He's walking along a shore when he comes upon a lone woman in a camp. Her drying rack is full of fish and she's a really fine-looking woman. "Gee, you got real nice legs and nice tits," he tells her, offering to marry her. She agrees, so he tosses his blanket into her brush shelter. She feeds him

fish. Then crow wishes for night to come quickly. "How about making love right away?" he asks. She doesn't know what making love is, so he tells her to take off all her clothes while he does the same and he shows her. After that they live together as man and wife. They catch and dry a lot of fish. Then one day when she reaches up to hang fish to dry, he notices her armpit hair is yellowish-brown. This makes him laugh. She wants to know why. "Lots of hair in your armpits and it's yellow-brown. That's the first time I see this kind of colour then." "It makes you laugh. O.K. I'm leaving you then," she says and she runs down to the water. Crow runs after her and grabs her by the shoulder but she turns into fog and his hand goes right through her. He hears a noise coming from the drying rack. Those fishes are coming back to life. They're wiggling and jumping to get back into the water. Crow opens his mouth and swallows them as they come by him, but they wiggle right through him, out his anus and into the water. He grabs a stick and clubs a few, but that's all he gets to keep. Then he runs to his boat and paddles after his wife. "My wife," he says, "come on, come back, come back, come back." He keeps following her, trying to talk to her, but he gets no answer. He's just paddling through a fog. He gets mad: "You, foggy woman," he shouts. "You, *ats'aw'inja*, I look under your arms and you got lots of yellow-brown hair—and between your legs too. Lice laid their young ones there—white ones. That's why your hair is kind of brown, not black. You've got too many lice there. You smell bad too. And now get mad at me. Don't think of me no more. No more will I think of you" (73).

CROW EATS A BIG FISH FROM THE INSIDE

This episode was already summarised in the previous chapter (144-5) .

CROW GOES FISHING WITH OTTERS

He walks along a river until he comes to a village full of people. They're otters who seem happy enough to see him, so he decides to stay awhile, but they don't feed him very well. Crow tells them that the fish they're catching are not very fat; where he comes from, he says, fish are much fatter. He's noticed that they have stored a lot of fish grease (rendered fish fat) and he means to get it for himself. He goes into the bush to gather white lynx droppings that he scatters where they gut their fish. When an otter man finds the droppings and rushes back to the village saying they must be those of a really bad animal, the otters all get scared and dive into the river. Meanwhile crow goes to the gutting place and removes the droppings. When the otters check again and find them gone they all come back. Now crow knows what they're afraid of. One day the otters ask him to show them where the fish are so fat. He does and the fish do turn out to be exceptionally fat. Crow pretends to go into the bush to make a fishing spear, but he really runs back to the otters' village, where he throws lynx droppings into every house before rushing back to where the otters are still fishing. At nightfall the otters build a makeshift camp and everybody goes to sleep...except crow, who stays awake thinking up a plan. In the middle of the night "he starts to make medicine" (ibid. 85). His loud singing wakes everybody. He tells the otters

he's just dreamt that bad things are happening back in their village. In his dream, he says, "We're running away from something. I sure dreamed about something bad" (ibid.). The otters send two young men to check. When they come running back panting that the bad animal has come back, they all decide to return to the village right away and if it's true then they'll look for a new village site. Crow walks back with them. He pretends he's really scared. He tells them that if it's true he'll run away and dive into the river too, but he doesn't swim like them, he says. He dives and walks a long way on the bottom. He picks up a big rock saying it's to help him stay on the bottom. When the otter people find the droppings in their houses they dive into the river. Crow only throws his rock into the river; he hides in a hole under the overhanging river bank. It's quite dark in there and since he's black, nobody can see him. When the otters come up for air they look back and see nothing so they think he must be still walking along the bottom. Once they're out of sight for good, he comes out of his hiding place. Now he's got all the otters' fish grease to himself.

CROW MARRIES A MUSKRAT WOMAN AND STEALS THE SUN³⁸

He's walking along a lake when he meets a muskrat woman. She's looking for food. He shows her how to dive for the roots of *ihthhya*, sometimes also called "*intsan*", "Indian carrots" or "Indian turnips". The

³⁸ As is clearly demonstrated by Lizzie Hall's translation of his taped 1984 Northern Tutchone text, Mr. McGinty separates these two events into two distinct episodes, in the first of which crow marries the muskrat woman and in the second of which he steals the sun. In the first episode crow's main antagonist is moreover a salmon while in the theft of the sun episode his chief antagonist is a trout. Mr. McGinty joined these episodes together in one of his later tellings.

woman gets lots of those roots and she and crow get married and live on that for a while. One day they're walking along the shore when crow spots a lake trout jumping on the water. He calls out, "Fish, see this woman who's here with me. I wish that she were your wife. But she's mine. She's a good-looking woman" (ibid. 90). After a while crow realises that she's not behind him any more. He hears someone calling: "Ts'ehk'i, crow, look at my wife here." That muskrat woman is now sitting on trout's back. Crow doesn't know what to do. He starts walking again until he comes to frog woman. She asks him why he's crying. He says someone kidnapped his wife. Frog woman lifts up the edge of the water with a stick the same way you'd lift up the edge of a blanket to peek underneath. Crow sees everything going on under the water. He sees his wife walking on the bottom near where there's a very strong light shining. Right away he wants that light. He asks the frog woman to help him get his wife back. She says first he'll have to get something for her³⁹. He brings her various kinds of tree limbs, but that's not what she wants. Then he brings her a willow catkin that she finds to her liking and asks for more. He gets her plenty. Now she'll help him. She tells him to take those tree limbs, a rope and a chunk of ice, then she lifts the water up again and he ducks under and makes his way to trout's house. The trout is a *dān nozhi'*, a big shot with a trout wife and daughter. He's made muskrat woman into a handye, a slave. Crow hangs around a short way off until he sees his muskrat wife chopping firewood. Crow goes to her. She says trout is really mean to her. He asks her where that bright light is coming from. From inside trout's house, she says. She also tells him that the trouts are afraid of steam. Then Crow medicine

³⁹ Note how the reciprocity custom operates here too.

thinks trout's daughter into feeling very thirsty and going down to the river for a drink. She dips out a cupful and brings it to her lips, but there's a speck of black dirt in it. She dumps it out and dips again; she does that repeatedly but that speck of dirt is always there. Crow medicine thinks her into drinking it anyway. She's just swallowed crow's spirit. Now she's pregnant, just like the Virgin Mary got pregnant, without ever knowing a man. The girl's baby grows really fast. And the more it grows, the more the trouts are fond of him; they always give him everything he wants. One day he cries for that light that's really the sun. He cries until his grandfather gives it to him to play with inside the house. He plays with it like it was a ball. But then he wants to take it outside, so the grandpa has his handyman build a high fence all around the house before he'll allow it. Then muskrat woman dumps a pan-full of water into the fire, making lots of steam and scaring the trouts into hiding in another room. The little boy kicks the sun over the fence and crow catches it, hoists muskrat woman over his shoulder and runs off. The trouts come out and find the sun gone. They raise the alarm and all the fish in the lake chase after crow. They're catching up fast, so crow throws each of those branches behind him, one at a time, and each time it becomes a barricade that temporarily slows the fish, but soon they're on the verge of catching up again. Crow tosses that chunk of ice behind and it turns into an ice-wall those fishes can't go through. That's how crow steals the sun and gets his wife back. Then he calls everybody over and tells them to try and put the sun into the sky. They all take turns, but it always falls back down. Crow applies tree pitch to the back of it and when he throws it up it sticks for good.

CROW GETS FIRE

He's walking by a large lake or perhaps the ocean. Far out on the water a big spark flies up every once in a while, goes way up, and falls back down. Crow calls all the birds, including kushekok in to help. He wants them to catch one of those sparks and bring it back. They all try but it's just too hot and they're forced to drop it short of the shore. Crow finally sends kushekok. "Make a name for yourself, he tells him, and don't worry if your beak starts to burn, I'll fix it after; but when that fire gets into your eyes, throw that spark over to me and I'll grab it," he tells kushekok, whose beak was a foot and a half long then (ibid. 104). Kushekok does his best until that spark gets so hot that he's sure his eyes are going to burst. He tosses it to crow, who tosses it onto the shore where it starts a forest fire. Kushekok's beak is burnt right off, so crow makes him a new one, but it's only about an inch long and bent down crooked, just the way it still is, and that's also why that little owl still has burnt black feathers on its face.⁴⁰

CROW LOSES AN EYEBALL

He comes to a river; it's the biggest and greatest he's made. He decides to build a canoe. He starts to peel off the bark of birch trees and to stitch the panels together with roots and plug the holes with pitch. Then it occurs to him he should post a guard, so he takes one of his eyes out of its

⁴⁰ Here, in his textualization, Dominique Legros inserts an episode that he entitles "Crow paints the birds" (1999, 109-111) that, as Mrs. Hall's translation shows, does not figure in Tommy McGinty's 1984 Northern Tutchone text of the story of crow. Legros' textualization of this episode is actually based on a 1991 telling by Mr. McGinty.

socket and places it on top of a willow stick. He tells it to watch for people coming down the river while he works. Every few minutes, the eye hollers that someone is coming, but every time crow rushes down to check, it turns out to be driftwood. He becomes angry and throws the eye into the river. "Float down," he tells it, "I'll find you back some other place" (ibid. 115). He finishes his canoe and starts paddling down the river, all the while looking for his eye, but he can't find it anywhere. He comes to a village. The people there are perhaps gopher people, or weasel, or groundhog—Mr. McGinty isn't sure—in any event, they're some kind of small animal people. They feed him and start playing ball. Crow realises that their "ball" is his own missing eye. He stands behind one of the players and medicine-thinks him into missing his catch and, being right behind, makes the catch himself and puts the eye back in its socket.

CROW LOSES HIS BEAK

He paddles until he comes to a new village whose people greet him saying, "Ho-hei, ho-hei, ho-hei!" (ibid. 119). That's what old time Indians used to shout whenever they saw someone coming in a canoe. These people are fishing and rendering the fish's grease that they store in fish air bladders. They complain that individual air bladders just don't hold enough. Crow says they should glue several bladders end to end with pitch so they can fill them like long sausages. That's what old timers used to do, he says. Then he says he'll go out into the bush and rest a while. They do as he suggests, and the sausage gets ever longer, so they just keep pushing it out into the bush and

adding more bladders on the end and pouring in ever more grease. In time the far end gets to where crow is hiding. He pokes a hole in it and starts drinking the grease. But he hears someone coming, so he puts on a bear skin. The fellow sees him, gets scared and runs away in a panic, eventually coming back into the village, though crow's already there ahead of him. The man tells the others what he saw. That must have been a bear, says crow; when they'd see one, the old timers used to hit it on the end of the nose with a little stick and it'd run away. Everybody goes back to work and crow goes back into the bush, puts that bear skin back on and returns to sucking grease. Then another man comes up and believes he sees a black bear. He grabs a stick and hits it hard on its nose and knocks it out. The people come out and when they grab that animal its skin comes off. They see that it was crow fooling them all along so they tear his beak off and give it to an old widow. After a while, the people realise crow's gone, though his canoe's still there. He's a mile or two upstream making five rafts out of driftwood and he mans them with paddlers made out of moss. Then he runs back to the village telling the people he was soaking his face in cold water to relieve the pain. Then somebody hollers "Ho-hei, ho-hei, ho-hei!" Those rafts are coming. While the people's attention is drawn to them, crow goes looking for his beak. He knows an old lady's got it. He goes to her and asks for it back. She allows that she might have it, but even if she did, she wouldn't give it back for nothing. Crow asks what she wants in exchange⁴¹. "She opens her legs for him. 'Make love for me first,' she says" (ibid. 122). Crow says sure and he works hard at it. Afterwards the old lady says he's definitely earned his beak

⁴¹ Note the reciprocity principle in action once again.

back alright and gives it to him. When he goes back everybody's still on the riverbank watching those rafts coming. Then the rafts break apart into the original driftwood and moss. The people get mad at crow for fooling them again and start chasing him. He flies off into the bush where he hides all night, sneaking back to retrieve his canoe early the next morning and paddles away. As he paddles he's wondering why those people holler "ho-hei, ho-hei." When he sees another town way downstream, he lands and builds another batch of rafts, also manned with moss. Then he paddles to the town. The people spot him and holler "ho-hei, ho-hei". Crow asks what they mean by that but they ignore him and keep hollering. So he medicine-thinks his rafts and moss people to dissolve back into driftwood and moss. "Crow lied to us!" say the people. "He just wanted to laugh at us because we use words without any real meaning" (ibid. 124). Crow races to his canoe and paddles hard to get away before they catch him.

CROW BEATS A JEALOUS GOPHER MAN

He comes to a big town of gopher people. They tell crow about *goen tsaw*, the jealous gopher who lives a couple of bends down the river. He has a real good-looking wife that he's insanely jealous over. He won't let anyone come around his place at all for fear they'll get to her. Crow says that he's going to talk to her; maybe he'll even make love to her. "No way! You're much too black," they say (ibid. 126). That makes him angry, "Who made the world for you?" he asks. "And right now I'm still working on something for you. Why do you talk to me like that?" They don't want to anger him so they don't

say any more. The next morning he lies down on the bottom of his canoe and draws his blanket over himself, moaning as if in great pain as he drifts down to the jealous gopher's camp. The gopher, who's fishing nearby, rushes over in his dugout canoe. He hooks onto crow's canoe and pulls it ashore. What are you doing in there? he asks. Crow calls him "brother-in-law" and tells him he's really sick and needs help. He wants the gopher to carry him in his blanket up to his place and let him lie outside by his campfire. And that's what the gopher does before going back to his nets, but before he's half way there he gets worried about crow and his wife and he rushes back, only to find that everything's the same as he left it, so he goes out again. Meanwhile, crow sneaks a peek at the gopher's wife. She's sitting on her heels inside the brush shelter across the fire from him. She's really pretty. Then crow hears gopher coming back and pretends to be asleep. This happens a few more times before gopher goes inside his house for his bag of powdered red ochre. He sprinkles some of it in his wife's lap and tells her not to move. If she moves while he's gone, the ochre will fall off her dress onto the ground and he'll know it. He leaves for a while, but is soon back. He can tell by the ochre that she hasn't moved at all and the wind has even blown some ashes from the fire onto crow's blanket, so he's satisfied nothing's changed and he goes back fishing. As soon as he's gone crow laughs aloud. He raises his head to have a better look at the woman, who bares her breasts to make him want her even more. He medicine-thinks for a lot of fish to get caught in gopher's net and to drag that net and the gopher way down the river, and that's what happens. He tells gopher's wife that he wants to make love to her and she's all for it too. He tells her to carefully gather her dress together to trap that red

ochre into the folds and then to lift the whole thing up and hold it carefully while spreading her legs. Crow then comes over and makes love to her. "Old timers said he made a real good time in between there," comments McGinty (ibid. 128). After, crow goes back across the fire as before and tells the woman to blow at the fire so ashes will again cover his blanket and then to sit back on her heels and to carefully pull her dress back down as it was before. When gopher returns there's no reason to suspect anything. Crow pretends to wake up. He tells gopher he feels a little better and asks to be carried back down to his canoe and set adrift again. The gopher does it, but as he's watching crow's canoe drift away he realises that crow's watching him too. "Hey, crow, what is it you're doing now? he hollers (129). Crow gets up and tells him he just made love to his wife. Gopher runs to his dugout and chases after crow, who lands on a sandbar in the middle of the river, carries his canoe across to the other, faster flowing channel and paddles away. Gopher knows he's beat since his dugout canoe is much too heavy to carry across the sandbar. He paddles back to his camp, grabs a big stick and clubs his wife to death. Crow goes back to the village and tells the people what happened, but they won't believe that anyone would want to make love to a black thing like him. Crow tells them to go see for themselves. Some of them do and find gopher's dead wife. When they get back the people tell crow he's the best.

CROW AND TUUNDYE HAVE A CONTEST

Crow drifts down the river till he comes to Tuundye. Which of us is the eldest, asks Tuundye. Crow says he is. Tuundye says, no, he is. They argue a while, then crow says let's settle it with a bow-shooting contest. The one who shoots farthest has to be the eldest. Tuundye shoots first. His arrow almost makes it all the way across the river before falling into the water. Crow's arrow is fletched with zhäak-imbued magpie feathers. And as he's preparing to shoot, he's making medicine. He tells those feathers that when that arrow starts to go down, they're to make it go right back up again. He shoots. The arrow goes for a bit, and then starts dropping. "Up again," he shouts in his mind (*ibid.* 134), and that arrow goes right back up and keeps going forward, not only clear across the river but over a mountain too before disappearing on the far side. Tuundye knows he's beat; "You're right, you're the oldest one alright. Me, I was just a kid. Now I know," he says (*ibid.*).

CROW KILLS A CANNIBAL HORSEFLY

This episode was summarised in Chapter 2 (145-7).

CROW MAKES THE FIRST WOMEN

He lands in another town where there are only men. They don't even know about women. Men are forced to make love with men. ("Poor things," comments Tommy McGinty. "They are all swollen up where they poop" (*ibid.* 141). They tell crow that further downriver there's a tunnel into a bluff by the river; it opens into a semi-flooded cave, deep enough to paddle a canoe into

and that something in there makes a sucking sound. There's a sort of large driftwood log, but made of stone with one end pivoting on a boulder and the other swinging up and down, higher than the cave entrance and then back down into the water with a splash. Many men have tried to sneak past that stone log while it's up but it always comes down on their canoe. Many others tried to sneak in while it's under water, but it always comes up and flips their canoe. Either way they all drowned. They ask crow to try to get inside that cave to retrieve some of those things that make the sucking sound. Crow agrees to try. First, he builds a new canoe. Then he makes a bow and many arrows from willow sticks. He paddles to the cave and medicine-sings to the stone log, telling it to stay down long enough for him to paddle over. Then he shouts "Gawndye!"—"That's a coast Tlingit word", comments Mr. McGinty (ibid. 143)—and paddles in. Now he can make out those things making the sucking sound through the murky water. He shoots an arrow at one of them, grabs the arrow's shaft and pulls that thing out and drops it into the canoe. In Mr. McGinty's own words:

That's the women's own he caught...so all that time it was the women's *druu* that was in there. Whiteman way, *druu* means cunt. But *druu* doesn't sound bad in Indian language. I don't know why cunt looks dirty in English. It's a surprise to me. Maybe the Whiteman has no respect for the women's own (ibid. 144).

Once his canoe is full, he medicine sings the stone log into staying up while he paddles under it and onto the river again. Back in the village he lines up the men by couples, a wolf man and a crow man together. Then he asks which one wants to be the woman (or the "free-male", as Mr. McGinty likes to pun) and to those he says to drop their pants. He slides a vagina over each man's penis, which then drops off, making him a woman. Then crow tells

everybody about the laws that they are to live by. After that the people have a big celebration. Every couple makes love. It's the very first time they've ever done it that way and they like it a lot. Meanwhile five dogs are walking through camp. In those days dogs talked like people. One dog makes fun of the people making love. This embarrasses some of them into stopping. Crow decides that's not good because the people have to make love if there are to be children, so he dips the end of a stick in excrement and calls the dogs over and gets them to open their mouths and stick out their tongue, which he paints with shit. Make fun of the people now, he tells them. But now they can only bark.

MOOSE, CARIBOU, SHEEP AND GOAT

Crow goes down the river some more until he comes up to a new camp. The people there tell him that some of them are disappearing. Crow searches around the bush until he comes across a camp where moose, caribou, mountain sheep and mountain goats are living. There are bits and pieces of human bodies scattered all over the camp. Those animals have been eating people. Crow medicine-thinks all of them into having a raging toothache. He goes into the bush and picks a large birch-bark pan full of cranberries, which he then boils. He tells the animals to open their mouths wide and he pours a ladle-full of that boiling medicine into each of their mouths, telling them to close it and to keep it closed no matter how hot it is. He then goes back into the bush to gather leaves. He comes back to moose and tells him to spit out the cranberry medicine; then he shoves those leaves

into its mouth and tells it not to spit it out. He tells it that from then on that will be its food. It's not to eat people any more. He does the same for the other animals, each to its own special plant food. And he tells them in which part of the country each is to live from then on. Then crow tells the people that now that he's made all the laws for them and shown them all how they should live, he's going to go away. Tla'ku! "That's it! It's done"⁴² ⁴³

OTHER RAVEN STORIES FROM NORTH AND SOUTH, EAST AND WEST

The Northern Tutchone Nation's story of crow is not unique. Virtually all Athapaskan nations have closely related foundation narratives. In addition, many Aboriginal nations living along the Pacific coast of North America from Oregon to Alaska have related raven foundation stories. Similar stories are also shared by the Inuit from Alaska to Greenland, and by Aboriginal peoples living across the Bering Strait in North-eastern Siberia. Quite by accident, I recently stumbled upon an Eastern Woodland foundation narrative featuring a raven and an earth diver that was recorded by Jesuit missionary Paul le Jeune in 1633.

THE HAIDA RAVEN CYCLE

⁴² Here I'm quoting Lizzie Hall's translation of Tommy McGinty's final words for the 1984 Northern Tutchone text of the story of crow.

⁴³ In his 1999 textualization Dominique Legros ends with two more episodes taken from the 1991 narration, the first of which is entitled "Crow's mother-in-law" (1999, 161-172) and the second of which is entitled "Indians get to be too many for crow" (1999, 173-178).

Many Canadians may not know this, but they are already aware of the Haida Nation's raven story through Haida sculptor Bill Reid's famous *Jade Canoe* that's pictured on the back of Canadian twenty dollar bills. The bird figure at the helm of the jade canoe is Reid's rendition of the Haida raven⁴⁴. This traditional Skidegate Haida narrative was recorded in 1900 by previously mentioned American ethnographer and linguist John Swanton, who took down the words of a Haida storyteller named Skaay, translated and published them in 1905 under the title "Raven Traveling" (Swanton 1905). At first glance, the Northern Tutchone story of crow and the Skidegate Haida raven story appear very similar but, as we shall soon see, there are major differences. Both open the same way—the world is flooded and like the Tutchone crow, the Haida raven is flying above the water, but instead of dressing up in the skin of waterfowl, he flies directly up to the sky, magically pulls himself through into a town on the far side where he skins the headman's daughter's newborn baby and puts on its skin, thereby usurping its high-born child identity. At night, when everyone's asleep, he comes out of the baby's skin to wander about the town, stealing sleeping people's eyeballs that he then roasts in the ashes of the house fire and eats before getting back into the baby's skin once more. When he's caught, the headman casts him out of the sky into the ocean below, where he floats around until his "grandfather" calls him into his house at the bottom of the sea and gives him two cylindrical objects, the ends of which he is to bite off and stick together. When he does, the objects grow into all the land on earth—raven is thus his

⁴⁴ To hear Bill Reid's own explanation of each of the mythical occupants of the jade canoe (also known as "The Spirit of Haida Gwaii") visit the following website:
http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-74-1273-7230/people/bill_reid/

own earth diver in the Skidegate Haida raven story. Echoing the Tutchone cycle where crow steals the water and the fish from tuundye, the Haida raven steals the salmon (from the beavers); he steals fresh water from eagle (who kept it in a basket tucked under his arm), and it is when he flies off with eagle after him that water is spilt and lakes and rivers are accidentally created. Skaay's raven spends time inside a whale that he eats from the inside; he also clubs a salmon that he tricks into jumping out of the water and hitting him in the chest, and just like crow, he foolishly loses it as soon as it's cooked—to a bunch of crows instead of a root. Raven also has himself reborn by having his spirit swallowed by a powerful man's virgin daughter so he can steal his greatest treasure: the moon, with which he flies away through the house's smoke hole. He then bites the moon into two large pieces and countless small ones that he then tosses into the sky, where the small pieces become the stars and the large ones the moon and the sun. If raven creates the people, it is not for altruistic reasons, but because he needs servants to wait on his guests at a potlatch. And if he goes out to the "island of vaginas" to spear several of those organs, it is not out of pity for men without women, but to endow his own mother, sister and aunts with these organs so that he can trick, bully or cajole each and every one of them into making love with him. The marriage with fog woman and the tricking of his mother-in-law episodes have counterparts in the Haida cycle, though here the former is called "cloud woman", and it is not his mother-in-law⁴⁵ that raven tricks into "sitting" on his erect penis, but his own sister.

⁴⁵ Though Legros includes an episode in which crow tricks his mother-in-law into making love to him in both of his textualizations, I did not include it in my summary because McGinty told it in 1991 only.

THE TLINGIT RAVEN

After leaving Haida Gwaay (the island home of the Haida nation) John Swanton visited several other nations, including the Tlingit, whose raven stories he also recorded, though here he only recorded these stories in English paraphrase. The Tlingit raven (Yēł), has much (though not all) in common with crow, and this is not surprising considering that the Tutchone and the Tlingit were trading partners for hundreds of years (and possibly longer). Yēł does not create the world, which already exists, created by his uncle, "a being called Raven-at-the-head-of-the-Nass or Nās-ca'kî-yēł" (Swanton 1909, 80), who lives with his daughter and 20 other beings, old men of power, of whom he's the most powerful. Under the world lives raven's mother, Nās-ca'kî-yēł's sister, who'd had countless babies, all of whom died prematurely until heron told her to swallow a red hot pebble, which made her pregnant and she had a son who survived and turned out to be raven. Nās-ca'kî-yēł keeps the stars, moon and sun in bags in his house. Raven turns himself into a piece of dirt in a cup of water that Nās-ca'kî-yēł's daughter drinks down. This makes her pregnant and thus is raven reborn. As a baby he cries for the bags that contain the moon, sun and stars until Nās-ca'kî-yēł gives them to him. Raven then allows the stars, the sun and the moon to escape into the sky. Raven then tricks petrel into lowering his guard over the only fresh water spring in the world long enough to take a huge quantity of water into his mouth and he flies away to drop some of the water here and there to make rivers and lakes. Then he sends a chicken-hawk with a piece

of pitch wood in its beak to light it at a fire burning out at sea and bring it back to him. He places this burning pitch together with cedar on a rock and teaches the people how to light fires from it (ibid.). He also teaches people how to fish and hunt (84). It is he who tells the Tlingit about Athapaskan Aboriginals. He eventually goes to live in Athapaskan country and this is how the Tlingit learn to visit their eastern neighbours every year to trade (ibid. 89). At one point, raven spots a whale out at sea. He gathers pitch wood and fire-making stones and flies into the whale's mouth. Then he eats the whale's heart. This of course kills the whale. Raven then sings songs of power to make the whale go ashore on a sandy beach where people cut the carcass open so he can fly out (ibid. 91). Once the people have rendered the entire whale's grease, he frightens them into abandoning it and appropriates it for himself (ibid. 91-2). In one episode raven marries fog woman but they soon quarrel and she turns into fog and disappears into the water together with all the salmon she'd caught (ibid. 108).

TALES FROM THE DENA

The Dena are Athapaskan Nations living in the watersheds of the lower Yukon, Tanana and Koyukuk Rivers. These tales were recorded in 1935 by Frederica de Laguna and Norman Reynolds. In "Tales from the Nenana", Titus Bedes has crow killing "Foggy Man" who's been making people disappear out on lakes, a story that closely parallels Tommy McGinty's story of crow's killing of the horsefly man (same canoe race, same trading of canoes and crow making his zhäak-powered canoe turn back to its

original components (de Laguna 1995, 86-8), as well as some elements similar to some of the fog woman episodes. In another episode, when crow is asleep the people take his beak from him in the hopes that, unable to eat, he will starve. Crow turns spruce cones into warriors and has them marching on the village. He tells the people that they better run and in the ensuing confusion he retrieves his beak from a sack in which an old lady keeps it (ibid. 120). In "Tales from Tanana Mission," Blind Joe tells a tale in which crow fights a chief at the end of the world who's been causing people to die. They're so evenly matched that they kill each other. The chief at the end of the world then asks crow, "What are we going to do now that we are dead?" Crow answers, "Well, the only thing to do now is for you to be the sun and I'll be the moon" and that's what they do (ibid. 153). In "Tales from Koyukuk Station" crow steals the sun and moon much as in the Haida version, i.e., turning himself into a spruce needle and having himself swallowed by the chief's daughter who becomes pregnant, etc. (told by Larson Charley, ibid. 201-9). This particular crow cycle is considerably less elaborate than the Tutchone, Haida and Tlingit versions, but this may be due to the fact that de Laguna didn't stay in the area long enough for the people to get to know her enough to trust her fully with their most significant stories.

CROW AMONG THE KASKA

The Kaska Nation is the Tutchone Nation's immediate neighbour to the east. John J. Honigmann spent a few short months among them immediately following the construction of the Alaska Highway. According to

him, pre-contact Kaska believed that the original world was destroyed by a universal flood. "Following the flood Crow restored the world, the myth describing that event being the familiar Earth Diver tale." He opines that though "present day Kaska recognized Tenatiia (crow) as a deity, the evidence strongly suggests that the name was syncretized to designate the God of the Hebraic-Christian tradition"; adding that "Nobody regards God and Crow as identical" (Honigmann 1964, 100).

NORTH ACROSS THE BERING STRAIT

The Koryak and the Chukchee peoples live in northeastern Siberia. While John Swanton was busy recording the traditional stories of the Haida and the Tlingit as part of the Jessup Expedition⁴⁶, Waldemar Jochelson was doing fieldwork among the Koryak as part of the same wide-ranging expedition. Jochelson had been charged with looking for "similarities in the beliefs and myths of the Koryak and the American tribes" (Jochelson 1904, 415). He found plenty, perhaps the most striking of which was how closely the Koryak's myths paralleled the myths of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian, "in which the raven is recognized as the organiser of the universe...indeed almost their entire mythology is confined to raven stories" (ibid. 416). The Koryak raven, called "Big Raven (Quikinnáqu)" (ibid.), steals the sun and releases it into the sky, gives light to humans, teaches them to hunt land and

⁴⁶ The Jessup Expedition, sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History, involved six years of extensive fieldwork, beginning in 1897, among the Aborigines of the Pacific Northwest and extreme northeast Siberia (PBS – Harriman: History of Exploration).

sea mammals, gives them the fire-drill and the drum, and sets up shamans to struggle with evil spirits (ibid. 417).

Some two decades later, Waldemar Bogoras conducted fieldwork among the Koryak's neighbours, the Chuckchee. According to Chuckchee storytellers it was Creator who made the original humans and showed them how to copulate and multiply (Bogoras 1928, 299-300). The Chuckchee raven is called "Ku'rkil" and he was originally white until he went across the dawn and stole the sun, moon and stars from a little girl and kicked them all into the sky. They were so hot that they burnt him black. Ku'rkil also created the rivers and other land features. According to these storytellers the original people moved far into the west and became the Russians; and that's when Ku'rkil created new people who were the Chuckchee and the Koryak. In other words, Creator is the creator of the Russians and Raven or Ku'rkil is the creator of the Chuckchee and Koryak (ibid. 301-9). In a striking parallel to Tommy McGinty's crow⁴⁷, one Chuckchee teller's version of one episode has Raven cut to pieces and still managing to put himself back together again, upon which he is cut into even more pieces and burned in a fire out of which he flies out cawing (ibid. 310-11).

THE ESKIMO RAVEN CYCLE

⁴⁷ In 1991, Tommy McGinty told a story that Dominique Legros entitled "Indians get to be too many for crow" (1999, 173-178) the last part of which is strikingly similar to this Chuckchee episode. Such striking similarities are all the more amazing when one considers that if archaeologists are correct the Northern Tutchone and the Chukchee have been separated by thousands of kilometres and the Arctic Ocean for at least twelve thousand years and possibly considerably longer.

According to Inge Kleivan, all Eskimos⁴⁸ (including those of Greenland) have raven myths closely related to those of the Aboriginals of the West Coast and Interior of northwestern North America. But only those of the Western Arctic and Alaska regard the raven as creator (Kleivan 1971, 42). The raven is however a trickster in all Eskimo raven myths, though only in the west is he both a “solemn” as well as a “comic” trickster figure, while in eastern Eskimo stories he is only a comic figure and he usually ends up “a laughing stock” (ibid. 46).

In 1970 Ronald Melzack published a book of Eskimo stories from the Western Arctic for young readers. All the stories were first recorded by ethnographers Franz Boas, F.A. Golder, A.L. Kroeber, E.W. Nelson, Knud Rasmussen and R.F. Spencer. In these stories Raven creates the Earth. At first, he’s flying into a nothingness in which it has been snowing since the beginning of time. One day, he catches snowflakes in his wingtips and forms a large snowball that he throws ahead into the snowstorm where it gathers ever more snow and grows until it becomes large enough for Raven to land on it to rest. He kicks at the snow and uncovers some earth underneath. It turns out that there’s earth everywhere under the snow. Later he makes seeds out of bits of earth that he presses together. One plant’s flowers mature into seed pods from which people emerge. Then Raven makes animals out of clay and assigns each one its particular niche in the ecosystem. He helps people learn how to hunt and fish for their food. At first

⁴⁸ I am aware that the peoples of the Eastern Arctic formerly known as Eskimos generally consider that term pejorative and prefer to be called Inuit. However, both Kleivan and Ronald Melzack use the term “Eskimo” exclusively, and the Inuvialuit of the Western Arctic (whose stories Melzack retells, and many of whom I met personally when I visited Inuvik in 2006 and again in 2007) prefer to call themselves “Eskimos”; I have therefore opted to use their term when quoting or paraphrasing Melzack’s and Kleivan’s own words.

it's always twilight until Raven sends a sparrow to get the light at the end of the earth. It's gone a long time, eventually coming back with the sun, moon and stars wrapped in leaves. Raven tosses them all up into the sky, creating daylight, night time, moonlight and starlight until an evil chief steals them and keeps them for himself in his tent. This evil chief has a beautiful daughter whom he loves very much. Raven changes himself into a tiny feather floating in a ladle-full of water that she is about to drink. She does not notice the feather and swallows it. She is soon pregnant and in due course gives birth to a child whom his grandfather loves so much that he can't refuse him anything that he cries for. When the Raven/child cries for the clay jugs in which the chief keeps the sun, moon and stars, the chief gives them to him. Raven flies off with them and puts them back in the sky once more (Melzack 1970).

THE EASTERN MONTAGNAIS/INNU RAVEN STORY

This story was told to Jesuit Paul le Jeune in 1633 by a Montagnais Innu informant living in the vicinity of what is now Québec City. According to the informant, a character named "Messou" is hunting with the aid of two lynxes. When the lynxes pursue a moose into the middle of a lake, they suddenly disappear. Messou starts looking for them but has no success at all until a bird tells him that they're being held by monsters living at the bottom of the lake. When Messou tries to go under the water it rises so rapidly that the entire world is flooded. Messou sends a raven to find soil with which to restore the earth. The raven asks an otter to dive for some but it's too deep

and it comes back empty-handed. The raven then sends a muskrat, who brings up sufficient soil for the raven to restore the earth. Unfortunately, le Jeune cuts the story short, writing that it would be too long a story to tell how Messou repaired everything, how he exacted his revenge upon the monsters who had stolen his lynxes and how this “beau Réparateur” (handsome fixer) married a muskrat woman who gave him numerous children who then re-peopled the Earth (le Jeune 1633, 75-79).

As incomplete as these all too short summaries may be, spatiotemporal constraints now compel me to leave off these wonderful tales to give Tommy McGinty's own constraints due consideration⁴⁹.

CONSTRAINTS

The question I will now try to answer is this: How does a combination of personal, historical, institutional, political, rhetorical and stylistic constraints operate on each state of Tommy McGinty's text? When Tommy McGinty first recorded his version of the story of crow in the Northern Tutchone language for Dominique Legros, a number of factors and/or constraints restricted or confined his textualization within certain bounds, while other factors or constraints, on the contrary, moved the text-maker to stretch the bounds within which such texts are usually circumscribed. In Tommy McGinty's case, some of these factors are relatively obvious while others are much less so.

⁴⁹ Note that my primary reason for providing this broad, though far from exhaustive overview was to situate Tommy McGinty's story of crow within the broader context of related raven story cycles for the benefits of readers who may have little prior knowledge of such cycles.

One aspect that shouldn't be overlooked is the sheer artificiality of the context of the 1984 tellings. An audience consisting of nothing but an anthropologist, whose understanding of the language of narration is limited, and his tape recorder, is not the sort of audience to whom Northern Tutchone elders normally tell their traditional stories. This means that, much like Deg Hit'an elder Belle Deacon when she tells her nation's traditional stories over the radio⁵⁰, Tommy McGinty also had to imagine "an implied listener" (James 1995, 195). To better understand the narration choices he made, it is necessary to try and determine who might have made up McGinty's implied audience. Knowing what we already know regarding his reasons for telling this story at this time, it is obvious that an important part of his implied audience had to have been all the generations of Northern Tutchone to come after his⁵¹. However, Mr. McGinty almost certainly also imagined another, very different, much less obvious, and yet just as important part of his implied audience. In Chapter 1, we saw how First Nations elders who tell stories at Whitehorse's International Storytelling Festival have very different motivations from those of their non-Aboriginal fellow story-tellers at the same festival, who are primarily public entertainers while Aboriginal tellers, according to Julie Cruikshank, seek most of all to reinforce their nation's position in ongoing land claims and self-government negotiations, even if much of their mostly white audiences is not always aware of this (1998, 149). As Tommy McGinty prepared to narrate the story of crow for the anthropologist and his tape recorder (and this was equally true for his

⁵⁰ See Chapter 1, page 73-4.

⁵¹ In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros stated that a major motive for Mr. McGinty to have him tape his telling of the crow story in Northern Tutchone was "to save that story in its original language for future generations."

performance in front of Tutchone students), land claims and self-government negotiations between his and other Yukon Aboriginal nations and the various levels of government had been proceeding without any significant result for some years. It is therefore highly likely that the current state of those ongoing negotiations had an impact upon Tommy McGinty's storytelling. Mr. McGinty cared too much about the welfare of his nation not to have availed himself of this opportunity to do what he could to further its causes. If that is so, then there must surely be evidence of it in his telling.

The very fact that Tommy McGinty chose to retell all of those he considered the most relevant episodes of his people's founding narrative is itself unmistakable evidence of the influence of Selkirk First Nation politics upon his taped 1984 Northern Tutchone text. The story of crow is virtually never told in its entirety (Legros 1999, 34-5). And this is not just true for the Northern Tutchone. My own search through the literature for other First Nations' versions of the raven creation story unearthed only one other (almost) "complete" version; this was the one that Skaay of the Skidegate Haida Nation told to anthropologist John Swanton in 1900. All the other versions that I was able to turn up were in fact pieced together by anthropologists from several separate tellings of various episodes by several storytellers of each given nation⁵². If McGinty chose to tell a very nearly

⁵² Robert Bringhurst argues that Skaay chose to tell his people's founding narrative to a white anthropologist at an exceptionally politically charged moment in his people's history—decimated and totally demoralized as a result of a catastrophic (estimates range as high as a 90% rate of mortality) loss of population due to so-called "virgin soil epidemics"—they had already as good as capitulated before the combined onslaught of Christian missionaries and Euro-Canadian officialdom bent on transforming them into Christianized English-speaking (albeit second class) citizens (Bringhurst 1999). For McGinty of course, the situation was almost completely opposite as, for the first time in nearly a century, his and other Yukon First Nations felt that they were negotiating from a position of relative strength and as an

“complete” version at this time, one of his reasons for doing so was almost certainly political⁵³. This brings us to Tommy McGinty’s chosen order of telling, which is by no means the “normal” order in which the crow story is told.

According to Dr. Legros, when asked a Northern Tutchone storyteller like Mr. McGinty will disclose the order in which the episodes of the crow story should be told (personal communication). Thus Legros 1999 follows a sequencing indicated by McGinty in 1991. But in reality, there is no “normal” order in which Northern Tutchone narrators tell the crow story. Each storyteller tells whatever portion of the story she or he feels is appropriate for each specific occasion of telling and tells it in whatever order he or she deems suitable for that particular session (Legros 1999, 243-4). This is why Tommy McGinty’s chronological choice for his 1984 telling is at once suggestive as well as intriguing. It is suggestive because it’s somewhat reminiscent of the Christian Bible’s chronology. It begins with the creation...or more precisely, the re-creation of the world and the laying out of lakes and water courses. The re-creator then travels through this world that, as he’s fond of reminding those he meets, he made for them, suffering many reversals, but overall being generally successful in ridding his world of various evil beings and never missing an occasion to tell the people and

important one of several still sovereign nations facing another sovereign nation (Canada) at the negotiating table.

⁵³ Dominique Legros reports that none of the numerous Northern Tutchone narrators that he listened to ever told all of the known episodes of the crow story in a single session, and this includes Tommy McGinty, who always omitted a number of major episodes—this is partly why Legros, in an attempt to be exhaustive, combined McGinty’s 1984 narrative together with his 1991 narratives (Legros 1999, 242-3). And yet Legros grants that, “indeed, [McGinty] deliberately left it incomplete in relation to what he knew” (personal communication), for, as long as Northern Tutchone narrators continue to tell their people about crow’s deeds at the beginning of time, it’s a safe bet that they will be moved from time to time by evolving sociopolitical developments to resurrect forgotten episodes to account for such changes.

other creatures precisely how and by what laws they are to live their lives. And then, like Jesus, crow, according to Mrs. Hall's translation, says, "and now that I made all the law for you about the way you should live, now I'm going to leave you, I'm going to go away"⁵⁴. Like all the Northern Tutchone of his generation, Tommy McGinty was well aware of the Christian Bible story, and especially the New Testament. The question is, did he choose this particular order of telling because he was unknowingly influenced by eighty years of Christian missionary preaching, or did he deliberately choose that particular chronology precisely because an important number of his "implied" listeners were white academics and through them, white politicians and, possibly, even Supreme Court judges⁵⁵? Tommy McGinty's chosen order is not only suggestive, but also intriguing. I believe that he was intelligent enough and possessed sufficient political ability to have deliberately tailored his telling so as to have the greatest possible influence upon the Euro-Canadian establishment, whose own founding narrative story is the Bible, and to have done so by making the parallel between the two stories as evident as possible. In 1991, when his audience was largely made up of his own young people, he chose a somewhat different and not quite so Christian-Bible-like order for his telling (even if, as previously noted, he begins and ends on a decidedly Bible-like note). He moreover omitted outright one of the episodes that he'd told in 1984 and added four that he had not chosen to tell

⁵⁴ In his 1991 narration, McGinty is even more Christian Bible-like when he ends with crow not only saying that he's going to go away now, but also promising to come back in perhaps two-thousand years and, lest his intent wasn't already obvious enough this time, he goes on to state that Jesus is none other than crow who's had himself reborn through the Virgin Mary (Legros 1999, 177-8).

⁵⁵ The idea of Supreme Court judges "judging" the worth of McGinty's narrative as evidence to prove his people's land claims is far from a mere fancy when we recall that the British Columbia and the Canadian Supreme Courts did precisely that for the traditional narratives of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en in *Delgamuukw vs. Regina*.

the anthropologist previously. In my view, these changes are easily explained by the different context and political goals for his 1991 telling.

Upon re-reading Mrs. Hall's translation, one is struck at how, in the episode in which crow steals Tuundye's water and then uses it to create the lakes and rivers, McGinty stresses that though crow also created all of the world's lakes and rivers, he created Yukon's first of all, thereby implying a definite seniority for Yukon's geographical features over the rest of the planet's. Then, in Mrs. Hall's translation of the episode when crow first comes upon the Yukon River, he pauses to reflect that of the entire world's rivers, this is the greatest and most important of them all, thereby reinforcing the earlier claim of seniority for Yukon waterways. From then on, as Dominique Legros (1999, 36) rightly points out, crow confines his travels to the Yukon River, which he now navigates by canoe. Up to this point, all of those with whom he's interacted have been animals in their human form and this will continue over yet more episodes, for it is only in the penultimate episode that McGinty has crow finally meet true humans on the shore of a river, which would have to have been the Yukon River (if crow confined his late travels to that river), almost exactly where the Northern Tutchone's traditional meeting and trading place, Fort Selkirk, is situated (if one allows that crow first comes upon the Yukon River near where it flows out of its source in the Southern Lakes⁵⁶). It is here that crow will now separate males into men and women. It is here also that crow proclaims the laws, customs and values that he wants humans to live by. It is moreover only a short distance away from here that

⁵⁶ Located in Southern Yukon and Northern British Columbia, Lakes Atlin, Bennett, Tushi, Tagish and Marsh are known as the Southern Lakes. Collectively, these lakes are the source of the Yukon River.

crow will transform anthropophagic moose, sheep and caribou into harmless vegetarians and give them their very own laws to live by, laws that include a "clause" requiring them to willingly offer themselves to all human hunters who follow the rules of respect owed food animals.

Political implications are clear enough. If humankind's original home was in the very spot where the Northern Tutchone have always lived, then it follows that the Northern Tutchone are the original humans, and as such they should hold the senior position among humans; they are, after all, literally the elders of humanity. And if the Northern Tutchone are the elders, then, should they not also be accorded an advantageous position at the land claims and self-government negotiating table? The evidence of Mr. McGinty's political intentions is subtle in his 1984 Northern Tutchone text, but it is indeed there to see for those who look for it. And if he did not make it any more obvious, it is simply that, as Julie Cruikshank shows in her analysis of their performances at the annual Yukon Storytelling Festival, the very hallmark of Yukon traditional storytellers is the subtlety of their purpose, which they are never crude enough to state directly, but prefer to let their audience apprehend intuitively.

TEXT 2: TOMMY MCGINTY'S SELF TRANSLATION

Very shortly after Tommy McGinty had completed his August 5 and 6, 1984 narration of the crow story in Northern Tutchone, Dominique Legros recorded his oral self-translation of the same text into English. This seems to have also occurred early in August 1984, though it's now impossible to

determine the precise dates because the copy of those tapes that Dr. Legros loaned me are not dated. The evidence suggests, however, that as he first sat down before Dominique Legros's tape recorder to narrate the story of crow in Tutchone, even before uttering his very first word, Tommy McGinty had probably already reasoned that he would be the one upon whom Dominique Legros would call to translate his own Tutchone text into English. But this was a relatively recent development, and the possibility that McGinty may even have used his considerable influence upon his relatives and fellow Northern Tutchone to bring this development about should by no means be discounted out of hand⁵⁷.

By early August 1984 Tommy McGinty had already been collaborating almost daily with Dominique Legros since at least July 10⁵⁸. By listening closely to the tape-recordings of this collaboration, I was able to determine that during this period Mr. McGinty's contribution consisted almost exclusively in telling stories in Northern Tutchone. The great majority of these stories are not traditional stories, but tales (at times very funny) about events taking place during McGinty's own lifetime (and in which he is sometimes the principal actor), or his parents' and even his grandparents' lifetime, the most remote of which goes back to the sack of Fort Selkirk in 1852. It is only in early August that McGinty suddenly begins to tell traditional stories,

⁵⁷ In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros stated that "This was arranged from the beginning before the Tutchone language version was taped"; but that it was arranged before McGinty taped his Tutchone version tends to reinforce, rather than weaken, my sense that the storyteller may well have had a hand in bringing this about.

⁵⁸ McGinty told a number of stories on July 10, as attested by the dates on the resulting audio-cassettes. Several more cassettes are dated July 22, some more July 25, 26 and 27, and more yet August 2 and 3.

beginning with the story of sojee, or little beaver man⁵⁹. On a parallel series of audiocassettes that he numbered sequentially but unfortunately never dated, Dominique Legros recorded the translation of each of these Tommy McGinty Northern Tutchone narration tapes. The great majority of them feature translation by Tommy McGinty's own matrilineal niece, Mrs. Rachel TomTom (Mrs. TomTom is Mrs. Lizzie Hall's elder sister), who translated all of the McGinty narration up to, and including the first two tapes of his narration of the sojee story. Then, a different translator, Mr. Steven Silverfox⁶⁰ suddenly takes over the translation of the sojee story. Mr. Silverfox, however, evidently translates only one day, never even getting to finish translating sojee; for, the very next day, yet another translator takes over. This new translator is none other than Tommy McGinty, who will translate all of his own narration from then on. Judging by the tapes' sequential numbers, Mr. McGinty began self-translating several days prior to the taping of his Northern Tutchone language narration of the story of crow.

McGINTY'S MODE OF TRANSLATION

By listening carefully to the first two tapes of his translation of the sojee story I was able to piece together Tommy McGinty's mode of translation. Dominique Legros begins by replaying an approximately 2 minute-long section of the audiocassette of the Northern Tutchone narration

⁵⁹ At the 2006 Yukon International Storytelling Festival, Carmacks Northern Tutchone elder Roddy Blackjack translated "sojee" as "son of beaver".

⁶⁰ Other than that he is a member of the Selkirk First Nation, I unfortunately have no further information regarding Mr. Silverfox, though I have reason to suspect that he is Tommy McGinty's matrilineal nephew.

of the marten episode of the sojee story. McGinty then translates this but it is soon obvious to me by the length of his “translation”, which is considerably more than two minutes, that he doesn’t stop once he’s translated the two-minute-long section that Legros just played for him, but keeps right on going, and going, until he’s “translated” the entire episode so that when Legros plays a further section of his taped Tutchone telling, McGinty tells him that he’s already translated that. This prompts Legros to play a further section of the same episode that McGinty then tells him he’s also already translated. This is when Legros understands that the entire episode is already translated, and so he plays the tape again, asking McGinty to let him know as soon as the tape reaches the end of that episode. Then, when they start to translate the next, or “wolverine” episode, Legros begins by warning McGinty that he’s to only translate the section that he will now play and no more. Then he replays a short section of the tape, which McGinty duly translates just as he’s been told, stopping as soon as he’s reached the end of the section just played. Legros then plays a new section for him to translate. Only this time McGinty, once started, keeps going, and going, until he’s “translated” the entire episode. From then on, Legros resigns himself to just asking McGinty to listen to his taped Northern Tutchone narration until an entire episode has been replayed, and then to translate it all at once. From that point on this is precisely how Tommy McGinty will self “translate” his own previous narration in Northern Tutchone, including the story of crow—episode by episode.

To properly analyse Tommy McGinty's self-translation, given my own lack of knowledge of the Northern Tutchone language, it was essential that I have his Northern Tutchone source text re-translated by a competent bilingual translator such as Mrs. Lizzie Hall, who was born at Minto, on the banks of the Yukon River. Her crow moiety mother was Tommy McGinty's eldest sister. When she was still a very small child, RCMP officers and a clergyman came to collect her with a view to confining her into one of the now infamous residential schools until the age of 16. She recalls the event as traumatic and a virtual kidnapping in which her grandparents (with whom she was staying at the time) were restrained by the police while the clergyman tried to convince her to come willingly, finally succeeding by threatening to jail her grandparents if she did not cooperate. Today, Lizzie Hall is mother and grandmother of many grown children and several grandchildren. She often volunteers to teach the Northern Tutchone language and traditional culture to the children at the Pelly Crossing primary school. Mrs. Hall received special training in the alphabetic transcription of the Northern Tutchone language from the linguists at Yukon College in Whitehorse. She is fully literate in English. When she encounters a particularly thorny translation difficulty, she does not hesitate to pick up her telephone to consult with her elder sister Rachel TomTom, who lives a few hundred metres away across the village of Pelly Crossing. Both sisters have collaborated with Yukon Native Language Centre Publications in Whitehorse to create and publish story books designed to help Northern Tutchone children learn their traditional language and culture. Lizzie Hall's contributions are as follows: *Tom Ts'áw Te Ts'in Nechí Dok Dézhe* (*Tom Goes out into the Bush to Camp*); *Denāk Ke*

Łádézhé (Hunting for Moose); Łyok Ku (Fish Camp) and Núuzhia Yunāy (Núuzhia's Story).

As competent as she is, and while she is highly reliable in all other aspects of her translations, Mrs. Hall cannot be fully relied upon to accurately render the sexually explicit sections of McGinty's narration. During our work together it came to light that her translation norms differ from Tommy McGinty's in one important way. While in his translation he never fails to take full advantage of every creative possibility afforded by the numerous sexually-explicit situations that crow gets himself into, whenever the source Tutchone story features sexuality in any form, she consistently does her utmost to downplay and even omit much of that section from her translation. When she translates the episode of crow's marriage with fog woman—which in his translation Tommy McGinty describes as a succession of sexual hanky panky relieved with periods of catching and drying salmon—Mrs. Hall reduces the episode to crow coming across fog woman, who has caught much fish; he suggesting marriage and she agreeing but he soon laughs at her armpit hair and she leaves him and turns into fog. There is no love-making at all in her translation. In the episode in which crow loses his beak and he asks the old lady who has it to give it back, and the lady says that he has to give her something in return, Mrs. Hall claims that she does not understand the word by which Tommy McGinty names what she wants in exchange—in Mr. McGinty's self-translation, the old lady asks crow to make love to her and when he does it enthusiastically she happily gives him back his beak—Mrs. Hall says, "I can't understand that word; I can't understand it; and said that lady, he give her something to that lady." This was followed by

this exchange excerpted from my original transcription of Mrs. Hall's retranslation of Tommy taped story of crow in Northern Tutchone:

L.H.: And then that old lady gave him back the beak and then he throw it back on to him; he run back down amongst the people.

P.C.: Okay, okay, so you don't know sort of what he gave her?

L.H.: I don't know; he just say something; can't understand that word; it's a long word.

P.C.: Okay.

L.H.: But he gave him something anyway, to pay back the beak.

The same kind of evasiveness occurs in other sexually explicit episodes such as the jealous gopher episode and especially the "crow makes the first women" episode.

Comparing the transcription of Tommy McGinty's self translation of his August 1984 Northern Tutchone text with Mrs. Hall's retranslation⁶¹ reveals that, as is almost inevitable whenever an author is his own translator, this is a creative translation in the sense that it is similar, but not identical to the Tutchone narration that it translates. Michaël Oustinoff has given considerable thought to self-translation. Contrary to a translation done by someone other than the piece's author, he writes, where the translation is just a "version" that can never "in advance" be considered "definitive" (2001, 31), a translation done by an author is automatically an "original" in its own

⁶¹ On July 4 and 6, 2006, I replayed all of Tommy McGinty's August 5 and 6 1984 recorded Tutchone telling of the crow story, one sentence at a time for Northern Tutchone elder Lizzie Hall, who translated each sentence orally while I recorded her. This took place in Mrs. Hall's Pelly Crossing home's living room. I used a Panasonic IC recorder (the type of recording device that professional journalists now routinely use in their interviews). As soon as I returned to my tent after each session (I camped in Pelly Crossing's public campground, which is owned and operated by the Selkirk First Nation), I transferred the day's recordings onto my laptop computer (Mrs. Hall kindly let me recharge my laptop computer's battery by keeping it plugged in one of her home's electrical outlets while we worked). I then converted each recording into a WAVE format sound file and an MP3 format sound file, saving a copy of each, both on my laptop computer's hard disc drive and on CD-ROMs. When our work was completed, I provided Mrs. Hall, the McGinty family and the SFN Government with one free CD-ROM WAVE format copy of each recording of Lizzie Hall's translation.

right. He furthermore argues that an author's self-translation should be treated as just as authoritative in every way as his original, even if his translation differs in some ways from his original, in which case the translation must be considered as the equivalent of a work of which the author has produced several consecutive versions over time (*ibid.* 13). A writer who translates his own writing (and this would also apply to a narrator who, like Tommy McGinty, translates his own narration), as Oustinoff points out, is "free to make any changes he wishes, even to the point of producing a true re-creation" (*ibid.* 24—my translation). But Oustinoff is writing about such famous self-translating authors as Julien Green, Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov and Oscar Wilde, all of whom had a certain control over the publication of their self-translations. Tommy McGinty, on the other hand, had no control at all on the ultimate publication of his self-translation. For that, he had to rely upon Dominique Legros, trusting that the anthropologist would publish his words exactly as he had uttered them. And it is well to keep in mind that he was illiterate, and as such, he had no reason to suppose that his editor (Legros) would feel free to modify and reorder his words as he saw fit. His own exact original words, after all, he could himself hear over and over each and every time that they were played back for him on the tape machine; and he could hear for himself that they were precisely the same each and every time. It is therefore likely that Tommy McGinty believed that there would be no difference between his words recorded on an audio-cassette tape and the same words recorded in writing in a book, whose signs, to those trained to decipher them, represent exactly the words of the author of that book. And because of his illiteracy, he had no way of knowing that the man

who was offering to be his "scribe" (Legros 1999, 29) could, if he chose, reorder, rework and even add new words to his original words, not for any malicious reasons, but because he was forced to obey constraints of his own, constraints that often had little to do with McGinty's own concerns and constraints. To illustrate, here is my own verbatim transcription of a section of Mr. McGinty's 1984 self-translation into English:

TM: Hair, yellow hair he see. That crow, the there he sat down. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, he laugh. His wife he say, what kind you laugh for? He said, huh, I just laugh, he said; under your arm, and there, lots of hair, he said, brown one, brown colour, he said. And that, that, that he turn to fog, he start go down back to river. He try and grab him, try and grab him, go right into him, drag him right into river, right in the lake. And he hear another noise behind; fish coming down behind him. It just like fish coming back live. Open all his mouth, and fish he shoot inside there, inside there, in, in, inside there, inside his mouth and he shoot out in the asshole again. Just go right clean through on him (my transcription).

And here is Dr. Legros' 1999 published textualization, which is much longer because it integrates details and explanations given by the storyteller in 1991:

Crow sees hair in her armpits. It's got a yellow-brown color. Not a black one. Crow finds this real funny. He starts to laugh, and he laughs... "Yah, yah, yah, yah," he chuckles. "Yah, yah, yah, yah, yah," he says. He's going to choke himself, laughing. "What for are you laughing?" his wife asks him from the fish-rack. "I laugh at you, I laugh at you..." "What's the matter with me?" she asks. "Ah, I just saw lots of hair in your armpits. And it's got a yellow-brown color. That's the first time I see this kind of color there." "Oh yeah," she snaps back. "It makes you laugh. O.K., I'm leaving you then. I'm going away for good."

She runs down to the river shore. Crow gets up and runs after her. He grabs her by the shoulder. But right at that time, she turns herself into fog, into some kind of haze drifting through the air. Crow loses his grip. His hand goes right clean through her. And the fog starts to float away above the water. It sprawls over the river and reaches its other side. Nobody can stop her no more.

Crow stands up all baffled. He just looks. There is not much else he can do.

Pretty soon, though, he hears lots of noise coming from the fish-rack. He turns around and sees all the fish coming back alive: those still hanging on the drying rack and those that have already been bundled up for the winter. They're bucking like hell, trying to get back into the river, trying to go behind crow's wife. Some of them are already leaping toward the shore. They're jumping up with all their strength. It's going to take another second for them to be back into the river. So crow opens his mouth as big as he can and tries to get as many of them to jump

inside. But these fish he swallows go right through his throat, stomach, guts, and, out through his asshole. It looks like he is shooting fish from down there. They spring right clean through his body. He can't do nothing. He can't stop them—nothing (Legros 1999, 71-2).

The published textualization is visibly much longer than the verbatim transcription. This is why the next chapter, which deals with Legros' textualization of McGinty's self-translation, is so central to this thesis. But before coming to that, let us first consider how McGinty's self-translation, as already stated, is creative in the sense that it is similar, though not identical to the Northern Tutchone narration that it translates.

First, McGinty sometimes omits details in English translation that he had included in Tutchone. For example, in the source Tutchone text, crow does not literally ask the mother seal to dive down for soil, he just asks her to make another rock like the one they are on stick out of the water beside it. Then (in Tutchone) the seal mom and crow argue, he wanting her to make another rock stick out beside the first, she arguing that that is the only rock there is, and that what he asks is quite impossible; in any event, if she were to go down to the bottom, she says, he would surely take advantage of her absence to steal her baby; to which he replies that he already has her baby. As they argue, she slowly lets herself slide into the water and goes under. After a time, a piece of ground floats up to the top. In McGinty's English translation, this business of making another rock stick out beside the first is not even mentioned. In the source Tutchone, McGinty is much more elaborate, with piles of driftwood, sandbars, fully growing live green trees and even whole islands floating up the first time the mother seal goes down, and the second time even hills and small mountains float up. That poor animal

must have been down a very long time, says Tommy McGinty in Tutchone, and it must have been choking with water and very nearly drowned and still crow kept holding onto its baby and making it dive back down and send up ever more, larger and more complete chunks of the old earth to the surface. As already mentioned, Lizzie Hall says that where I thought Tommy McGinty was saying “Bear Rock” in English⁶² on the 1984 Tutchone recording, he was actually saying “bedrock” in the geological sense of that word, and that he even added in Tutchone that “that’s what the Whiteman calls it: “bedrock”⁶³. Here, what McGinty is explaining in Tutchone is that thanks to his zhāak, crow ensures that the underside of this newly reclaimed ground becomes really hard, becomes “bedrock” so that the whole thing will never fall apart again. But this is entirely lost in translation. Also lost in McGinty’s English translation is how crow left seams akin to expansion joints in modern construction methods between his different islands of ground so that whenever earthquakes should occur it could shake and even stretch, but never actually tear apart again. And also lost is how funny crow looked when he spread out this reclaimed ground by jumping on it with his three-toed feet. That such details are sometimes lost in translation might, however, be partly due to Mr. McGinty’s much lesser ability to handle the English language compared to his own Tutchone rather than to any deliberate intention on his part. But if McGinty (deliberately or accidentally) sometimes omits some of

⁶² Note that it is not unusual for Tutchone storytellers to include occasional words in English in their Tutchone language narration; Mr. McGinty does it now and then and so does Roddy Blackjack.

⁶³ Relying upon McGinty’s miming, as already mentioned, Dominique Legros uses “bare rock” in the published book (1999, 47), and, like me, his research assistant had thought he’d said “Bear Rock”, as attested by his transcription of Tommy McGinty’s self translation of this episode,

the details that he had included in Tutchone, in his English translation, the opposite is also true. This generally occurs whenever he realises that a given detail requiring no explanation for a native Tutchone is completely unknown to the Euro-Canadian anthropologist (and hence to the Euro-Canadian portion of his implied audience). At the start of the flood episode for example, where he merely names the two birds that crow kills and skins in the Tutchone audio text, he goes to the trouble of explaining just what sort of aquatic birds they are and even how they feed themselves in his translation. Naturally, such an explanation would be redundant when narrating to a native Tutchone audience who already knows all of this.

DOMINIQUE LEGROS' INFLUENCE ON MCGINTY'S TRANSLATION

Some of the details that McGinty does include in translation, as in the example just cited, often lose much of their original colour, though this is not always so, especially when one such detail catches Dominique Legros' attention, either because he perceives it as a significant ethnographic detail needing further elaboration, or he feels that McGinty's point is unclear, in which case he asks sufficient questions to fully elucidate the point or elaborate on the ethnographic detail, with the net result that the translation often provides considerably more detail than the Tutchone version does. One example of an instance where Legros felt that McGinty's point was unclear and asked for more details occurs at the beginning of the crow's fancy new blanket episode. In his Tutchone language text, McGinty merely says that crow is walking along a lakeshore when he comes across a really nice

blanket that looks far superior to his own ragged gopher-skin blanket. This moves him to throw away the old one and to wrap the new one around himself. In his self-translation, McGinty adds, "And that blanket there, he made of mud I guess," a comment that makes Legros ask, "Out of mud?" To which McGinty explains that crow was fooled by those sheets of sand, mud, leaves, twigs and assorted debris you often find along the shores of large Yukon lakes.

A clear example of an ethnographic detail that Legros feels requires more elaboration occurs at the end of the "crow loses his beak" episode when Dominique Legros asks Tommy McGinty what kind of animals these people are who tore off his beak. After all, at this point crow has yet to create human women. Consequently, the old lady who has his beak has to belong to a species other than human. To this McGinty replies that of course she's some sort of animal, though he's not quite sure just what kind, but he's quite certain that it's not a large animal. In his Northern Tutchone text it never seems to occur to him that the particular animal species the old lady belongs to is of the slightest importance; she's an old lady, he says, and leaves it at that. Another such example occurs in the "crow beats a jealous gopher man" episode, in which the gopher sprinkles powdered red ochre in his wife's lap and tells her not to move while he's away. In his original translation, Tommy McGinty merely says "He put that red rock paint on his dress, on between his lap, between his leg. And he told his wife, don't move, just sit one place like that." This translation is nearly identical to Lizzie Hall's. It doesn't however satisfy Dominique Legros, who immediately asks for explanations, and thus obtains the added information that the "rock paint" in question is actually red

ochre and that the gopher actually pours it into a fold in the lap of his wife's dress where it will remain trapped, provided she doesn't move. McGinty even volunteers the added detail, also not present in his Tutchone text, that after they've made love and crow has gone back to his former spot on the far side of the fire, he tells the woman to blow on the fire's ashes so that he and his blanket will be covered with them, thus heightening the illusion that he hasn't moved in a long time⁶⁴.

Another such example occurs in the "crow marries a muskrat woman" episode. In the opening part of his Northern Tutchone text, McGinty only states that crow feeds the muskrat girl, but at this point he doesn't state what kind of food he gives her. In his taped Northern Tutchone text, it is only at the very end of the episode that he shows the muskrat girl how to harvest a certain kind of carrot-like root that the Tutchone call *intsan* that grows in shallow water at the bottom of Yukon lakes. In his English translation the storyteller immediately states that when crow spots the muskrat swimming around on the lake, he calls out to her, telling her to come over. Then he asks her what she's doing and she answers that she's looking for food. "And pretty soon they live on the root, they eat the root. This kind, he say, good to eat. And he eat it," continues McGinty on the tape. Legros wants to know if, "That's the kind of root you'd call carrot, that's the one?" And when McGinty says yes, Legros continues, "OK, just explain here, we tape it. You say it's white? It's like carrot, white *intsan*." At which point McGinty launches into a lengthy explanation (occasionally prompted by the anthropologist's additional questions) in the course of which we learn that *intsan* grows at the bottom of

⁶⁴ Note that in spite of the sexually explicit passages, Mrs. Hall translated this particular episode fairly accurately, though she used euphemisms instead of the explicit sexual terms.

Yukon lakes. It has relatively long stems with leaves on the end. These leaves sometimes float on top of the water, and sometimes do not grow tall enough to float on top; it depends on the depth of the water. Where *intsan* grows, muskrats also live because *intsan* is their main food. But *intsan* is not just food for muskrats; it's good food for humans too. McGinty explains that it was his grandfather, Copper Joe, who first showed him about it, one time when they had gone to Antawa Lake to hunt muskrats. The old man had taken off his shoes, walked out into the water barefoot and begun to pull up the carrot-like roots with his toes. When you uproot it, *intsan* floats up to the top, says McGinty, where you can then easily gather it up. McGinty says that he prefers his *intsan* cooked, but Copper Joe would eat his just like you eat raw carrots: "Same sound, same way when you chewing carrot. Chomp, chomp, chomp, chomp, same kind." None of this additional information appears in the Northern Tutchone source text for the obvious reason that such explanations would be redundant for native Northern Tutchone, and even in translation, it should be pointed out, McGinty did not see fit to explain any more than he had in Tutchone until Dominique Legros' questions made him realize that the average Euro-Canadian knows nothing at all about *intsan*.

A BRIEF COMPARISON OF TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1984 TEXT WITH HIS 1991 TEXTS

When Tommy McGinty's 1984 English self-translation text is compared with his 1991 audiocassette recorded English text of the crow story, one very noticeable factor immediately stands out and at first glance

seems to make it obvious that McGinty's concerns differed in his 1991 telling from those of his 1984 telling⁶⁵. In the 1984 text the sexual aspects of the crow story are at the forefront while the cultural aspects, though by no means overlooked, are nevertheless less prominent. In his 1991 "private" audio telling, it is the cultural aspect that's emphasized, while the sexual aspect of the story, though by no means overlooked altogether, nevertheless receives rather less obvious attention than it did in the earlier telling. This difference in emphasis is due to the difference in the context of the telling and a resulting change in the immediate concerns of the storyteller. Both audio-recorded tellings were decidedly private ones, the entire audience consisting of a Euro-Canadian anthropologist and his tape recorder. McGinty's 1991 videotaped Yukon College telling, on the other hand, was public, with his audience made up in large part of Northern Tutchone college students and his main concern was passing as much of his traditional knowledge onto them as he possibly could. It would however be a mistake to suppose that because he emphasised the cultural in his 1991 private rehearsal telling more than he did in his 1984 private telling that the former was in any way less political than the latter. As I've already argued, in 1984, among McGinty's less immediately obvious concerns were the ongoing land claims and self-government negotiations between Yukon First Nations and the Yukon and Canadian governments. By 1991, not much had changed. The very first "Umbrella Final Agreement" between the Canadian and Yukon Governments and only four of

⁶⁵ Dominique Legros was well aware of this, and it was in large part to ensure that his published version of the story of crow neglected neither the cultural, nor the sexual aspects of the story that he combined McGinty's 1984 and 1991 audio narrations as well as some visual information from the videotaped Yukon College telling together to produce his own English-language text (Legros 1999, 210-229).

the 14 Yukon First Nations would have to wait until 1993, two years later. And McGinty's own nation wasn't one of those four. For the Selkirk First Nation, the final land claims and self-government agreement wouldn't be formally signed until 1997, five years after Tommy McGinty's passing. If an important part of his implied 1984 audience had been the Euro-Canadian political establishment as a whole, then his 1991 private audiotaped performance's implied audience must have in even larger part consisted of that same Euro-Canadian audience. This is evidenced by the decidedly more serious tone of the telling, which doesn't waste much time on crow's funnier and most sexually charged high jinks, but concentrates upon the important serious cultural aspects of the crow story. There was no need to be entertaining for that telling's implied audience. The storyteller's intent here is even more obviously political that it had been in 1984. McGinty's 1991 Yukon College audience, on the other hand, consisting almost entirely of the brightest of his grandchildren's generation, must have appeared to him as the most ideal of all possible audiences⁶⁶. Under the circumstances, McGinty's 1991 private narration must have been just as politically motivated as were his previous private tellings. I believe that his 1991 Yukon College narration, on the other hand, was Tommy McGinty's cultural and political testament. It is a testament, moreover, that's addressed directly to his own young people, and as such its political content is geared almost entirely toward the education and motivation of young Northern Tutchone. And if he emphasised sexuality for a live audience of young Tutchone adults, it is simply that as the

⁶⁶ In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros stated that many people who were not registered in the course also attended, including young and old SFN people, local police officers, and so on, and that in the end it became almost less of a college course than "some sort of collective happening for three villages".

consummate storyteller that he was, he knew that by interspersing the more serious part of his telling with the funniest of crow's sexual antics, he would have a far better chance of communicating traditional Northern Tutchone laws, customs and values than he would otherwise. That Tommy McGinty was a traditionalist comes out loud and clear in this 1991 telling, where he deplores time and again that the young no longer follow the old traditions.

EVIDENCE OF MCGINTY'S POLITICALLY MOTIVATED INTERVENTIONS IN TEXT 2

Just as they were in his text in Northern Tutchone, Tommy McGinty's politically-motivated interventions, though subtle, are nevertheless discernable in the text of his 1984 English-language self-translation. In his translation of two of the three episodes in which crow either gets married or makes love, Tommy McGinty's description of the women stands out sufficiently to make the listener notice it and wonder why⁶⁷. When he translates the section where crow first comes upon the foggy woman, he says: "Nice looking woman, nice tit, tit just sticking out, you know. And nice leg, nice fat leg. Crow see it. Oh gosh, he said, geez..." (my emphasis). Then, when crow tricks the jealous gopher into carrying him up to his camp to let him lie on the far side of his campfire, McGinty adds this: "So he pick him up, he throw him other side camp fire. And his wife sitting down there. Big woman. Nice fat leg, and that crow don't know what to do. He wanna fool around with her" (my emphasis). In McGinty's public performance for the

⁶⁷ Keep in mind that, as I've already shown, the 1984 tellings had two implied audiences, one of which was the future generations of Northern Tutchone. This means that a significant portion of McGinty's implied 1984 audience was very similar to his very real 1991 Yukon College course audience.

Yukon College course, in the foggy woman episode, when crow first comes across the lady, the narrator says, “he look at leg, nice, fat; nice fat leg” (my emphasis). It could of course be argued that this insistence on “big” and “fat” is simply indicative of Tommy McGinty’s own personal taste in women, and this may well be true. But I think that it’s also much more than that. Because traditional Northern Tutchone standards of beauty, standards that, as it happens, are diametrically opposed to current Western society’s obsession for slimness in women, also have definite political implications. In an age when even the Northern Tutchone are exposed to hegemonic Euro-Canadian and Euro-American culture broadcast twenty-four hours of every day via satellite television, how else can elders, traditionally charged with perpetuating the nation’s culture, fend off these invading foreigners, if not by emphasizing the sexier, funnier parts of the traditional stories into which they subtly insert illustrations of traditional aesthetic tastes⁶⁸ that just happen to add to the general merriment already present in the most attention-grabbing parts of the traditional stories? At the same time, this has the added virtue of sharply contrasting Yukon Aboriginal culture with that of the imperialistic society these Aboriginals are striving to free themselves from via the ongoing land claims and self-government negotiations.

McGinty’s tendency to repeatedly assert that the crow story is universally known among Yukon Aboriginals, and even beyond, is yet another of his most obviously politically-motivated interventions. We already

⁶⁸ Note that my understanding of traditional Northern Tutchone men’s tastes regarding female beauty is based entirely upon my own informal inquiry among a limited number of Northern Tutchone men, whose tastes proved to coincide with crow’s own tastes as reported by Tommy McGinty. In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros corroborated the accuracy of my observation.

know this to be true, of course, but McGinty repeats it often enough that it soon begins to sound like a political statement. And that's precisely what it is, since it reminds the Northern Tutchone and the other Yukon First Nations that not only do they share similar cultures with many nearly identical aspects, but this also sets them sharply apart from their Euro-Canadian neighbours.

CHAPTER 4: THE TWO STATES OF DOMINIQUE LEGROS' TEXT OF THE STORY OF CROW

I will now describe and reflect upon the two states of the text of the Northern Tutchone's story of crow published by Dominique Legros. Both were largely derived from Tommy McGinty's 1984 and 1991 audio translations of that story, but to a certain extent they were also derived from a number of formal and informal ethnographic encounters between the anthropologist and the Tutchone elder, and, after his passing, from Dominique Legros' own sense of what such encounters would have been like, had they actually taken place. I will begin with the English-language textualization published in 1999 in the Canadian Museum of Civilization's Mercury Series of ethnographic publications. Just as I did for Tommy McGinty, I will try and determine and describe some of the constraints that Dr. Legros laboured under. One such constraint is a common one in academic anthropology; another comes from an obligation to conform to the expectations of one's publisher, yet another comes from Legros' sense of obligation towards Tommy McGinty's memory. Once I have described the 1999 publication, I will analyse Dominique Legros' French translation as published in Gallimard's *l'Aube des peuples* collection. As I will show, Legros' Gallimard publication was marked by a whole new set of constraints, not the least of which were his Parisian editor's expectations, which differed markedly from those of his Canadian publisher.

DOMINIQUE LEGROS' 1999 CONSTRAINTS

Dr. Legros⁶⁹ explains his reasons for recording, transcribing, textualizing and publishing McGinty's narrative and some of the constraints that he laboured under in the foreword to his 1999 Canadian Museum of Civilization publication, which opens: "This book is to tell in writing *The Northern Tutchone Story of Crow* which thus far, and since time immemorial, has only been narrated orally" (Legros 1999, 15). This sentence reveals the book's *raison d'être*—to publish a written record of a story that had hitherto only been told orally, and hence only to relatively small and overwhelmingly Aboriginal audiences. An additional reason is mentioned near the bottom of the same page where Legros states that his goal is to publish an Aboriginal narrative in a manner that "focuses on reporting the story and deliberately refuses to subject it to any particular anthropological theory" (ibid.). Three sentences on he states, "Broadly speaking, the approach falls within what is known as new ethnography" (ibid, 16). The "new ethnography", as already discussed in introduction and Chapter 1, (pages 22-24 and pages 82-84), is a late twentieth century attempt by some anthropologists to renew their discipline's basic traditional premise according to which,

⁶⁹ Dominique Legros is a professor of anthropology at Montreal's Concordia University. He earned a masters degree in Ethnology at the Université Paris-X in 1970 and a Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of British Columbia in 1981. In addition to numerous articles, he has published the English and French versions of Tommy McGinty's story of crow, and more recently (2007), *Oral History as History: Tutchone Athapaskan in the Period 1840-1920* (or the ethnohistory of the Tutchone from just before the time of first contact with Europeans to 1920). He also co-edited the following: (with Marie Mauzé) the *section Amérique du Nord*, *Journal des Américanistes* 1988 and 1989; (with Llewellyn Johnson in 2000) *Journal of Occurrences at the Forks of the Lewes and Pelly Rivers, May 1848 to September 1852*; and (with Irène Béllier) a 2001 issue of *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec* (*Mondialisation et stratégies politiques amérindiennes*). According to the biography on his own Concordia University Web page, "Dr. Legros conducts research on globalization and the rights of indigenous peoples, the survival of the oral literature and culture of indigenous peoples, and the anthropologization of European and Euroamerican traditions. He is dedicated to promoting international recognition of the importance of cultural diversity worldwide, and awareness of the coevalness (correspondence) of cultures."

reality [is] external to the perceiver...whose truth may be revealed and made known through detailed, objective observation and detached, dispassionate analysis. It is a reality that the properly trained and institutionally credentialed ethnographer is trusted to accurately describe. It is a place where truth about an other's culture is supposedly located (Goodall 2000, 11).

New ethnographers argue that postmodernists have convincingly shown that truth is always subjective and, therefore, so is scientifically informed discourse in general and ethnographic reports in particular. At the very least then, those who practice the new ethnography must openly acknowledge their subjectivity in their ethnographic reports, and, in ideal situations, they ought to let the other whom they report on speak for her- or himself in their publications. Hence Dominique Legros' declared intention of "reporting" the story of crow without "subject[ing] it to any particular anthropological theory."⁷⁰ He further explains that his "hope is that in this theory-free format the story may keep its sacred character and have as large a readership as feasible, among First-Nation Canadians as well as among other Canadians, among non-specialists and specialists" (ibid, 16). He then points out that anthropology usually terms stories such as this, "creation myths," a practice he refuses to adhere to, opting to alternatively call the story of crow "a sacred narrative," "the Tutchone Genesis," "a religious oral text," or simply "the story of crow" (ibid.). According to Dr. Legros, traditional anthropology would disagree with his approach since he attributes the story of crow to a single author (Tommy McGinty) even though "normally, a creation myth has no known author" (ibid.). Legros explains that he further

⁷⁰ If allowed to play devil's advocate for a moment, I would argue that the very notion of "new ethnography", no matter how one reflects upon it, can only be classified as an "anthropological theory" in its own right—which goes to show that there is simply no getting away from it; all academic research is always theory-driven and so is any writing about or derived from academic research.

distances himself from traditional ethnographic practice by deeming authentic McGinty's crow story episodes dealing with recent socio-cultural changes occurring since the arrival of Europeans in Tutchone country beginning with the Klondike Gold Rush in 1898, even though it is traditional ethnography's credo that "North American creation narratives are supposed to refer to the beginning of time and not to realities which have obviously been brought in the last few centuries by the coming of Europeans to America" (ibid, 16 & 24).

With this textualization then, Dominique Legros participates in a current that strives to break with past ethnographic paradigms and practices. As such he belongs to a "school"⁷¹ that saw its beginnings during the 1970s, when Legros first began doing field work in Tutchone country, and that seems to have come into its own around the turn of the twenty-first century when Legros was publishing his English (1999) and French (2003) versions of the crow story. Legros was by no means alone in breaking with long-established ethnographic assumptions and practices at this time. In Yukon alone, Julie Cruikshank's publications also broke with tradition⁷² and even Catharine McClelland, who'd long practiced essentially Boasian-style ethnography, and had long delayed publishing the bulk of the Aboriginal narratives she'd collected in the hope of eventually achieving an "ultimate interpretation", came to believe (thus also breaking with traditional ethnographic practice) that "No matter how dazzling any such analysis might be, it could never encompass all the qualities of the overt and covert aspects

⁷¹ I use the word "school" to mean a group of persons having common attitudes and beliefs rather than in its narrower sense of a body of pupils or followers of a master or system as in "the Boasian school of anthropology".

⁷² For example compare her 1990 *Life Lived as a Story* with her 1983 *The Stolen Women – Female Journeys in Tagish and Tutchone*, in which many of the same stories are featured, though in radically different ways.

of this ongoing expressive art" (2007, 1) and published all the stories that she'd collected just as she'd first recorded them, with the name of each narrator clearly indicated and a minimum of explanation except brief notes about the context of the telling. In this way, these three ethnographers are representative of a broad trend in their profession that's part of the still broader current of Postmodernism. It is too soon to tell if the practices and theoretical framework that currently fall under the heading of "the new ethnography" are destined to become the predominant model of ethnographic theory and practice or are but a way-station on the road to the emergence of such a model. One thing is clear however: many long-established ethnographic practices have been subjected to severe criticism and already have or will undergo significant changes.

But if Legros and some of his fellow new ethnographers have departed from long established practice at the risk of incurring the disapproval of some of their more traditionally-minded colleagues it is not so much out of sheer rebelliousness as a direct result of having had to face a new reality that their predecessors had seldom encountered. Legros and his fellow new ethnographers are keenly aware that those "others" whose cultures and traditional narratives they analyse and report on are now able to and certainly will read and criticise their reports. Such awareness cannot but have a major impact upon the way they exercise their profession and the style and content of their publications—hence the need for a new ethnographic approach.

According to Legros, the band council of Tommy McGinty's Selkirk First Nation asked him to stop reporting on the Northern Tutchone for the benefit of outsiders "down south", and to do something useful for the SFN by

becoming the “scribe” for one of its most learned elders, Tommy McGinty. He writes that after he’d agreed to their request, McGinty further refined his task as that of taping his telling of “the sacred Tutchone Narratives” and to have them published so that public schools in Tutchone villages would have a written version of his narrative (ibid, 19 & 23). In addition to the SFN council’s and Tommy McGinty’s goals, Legros added one of his own. He is an academic after all, and, as such he must, like all academics, pay heed to the “publish or perish” imperative. This imperative is, of course, a major motivator, but it is also a major constraint because for one’s text to be accepted for publication by a publisher who is recognised by academic ethnography, it must be such as to fall within the bounds acceptable to the discipline⁷³. This explains the hybrid form of the published version of McGinty’s crow story, with its lengthy academically-minded foreword and its even lengthier and just as academically-minded afterword sandwiching, as it were, the actual story of crow between them. It also explains why Legros the ethnographer so often felt compelled to supersede Legros the scribe during the translation process and constantly urged McGinty to elaborate upon and explain the ethnographic details attending the crow story far beyond the way that the Tutchone elder would have normally told it to a Tutchone audience. And it also explains why, when he deemed even that wealth of detail insufficient, he supplemented it with further details and elaborations obtained in the course of unrelated ethnographic encounters with Tommy McGinty. And it explains finally why he even included his own ethnographic explanations that not only

⁷³ It would be a mistake to suggest, as some have, that this constraint is only applicable to pre-tenure academics—virtually all tenured academics I know publish as much or more, not less, than they did before achieving tenure. I suspect that the fact that they can now more easily beg off administrative duties is no stranger to this increased output.

did not figure in any of the transcriptions, and that he states Tommy McGinty had not uttered himself, at least not in the telling of the story, but that he nevertheless feels Mr. McGinty would have offered if requested and that he therefore feels justified to insert into the text as if it had actually been said by McGinty to avoid using footnotes (ibid, 219)⁷⁴.

THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION PUBLICATION

The English-language version of Tommy McGinty's story of crow was published in 1999 as number 133 in the Canadian Museum of Civilization's Mercury Series of ethnographic publications. According to the Canadian Museum of Civilization's website,

The *Mercury Series* began in 1972 and was designed to permit the rapid dissemination of scientific, scholarly, and museological information pertaining to the disciplines for which the National Museum of Man was responsible. This included Canadian prehistoric archaeology, physical anthropology, ethnology, ethno linguistics, ethnohistory, folk culture and history, including military history. The six divisions of the National Museum of Man (the Archaeological Survey of Canada, Canadian Ethnology Service, Centre for Folk Culture Studies, History Division, Communications Division and the Directorate) and the Canadian War Museum had separate sequentially numbered publications in this series. When the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation came into being in 1990, the *Mercury Series* was retained as its primary publication series. In 2003, a separate series for the Canadian Postal Museum was introduced. The *Mercury Series* is comprised of over four hundred specialized publications and is recognized by scholars to be an important reference on Canadian history and prehistory. Unless otherwise stated, all publications are paper bound and appear only in the language of the author(s) (Mercury Series web page).

⁷⁴ In a recent personal communication, Dr. Legros stated that one of the constraints that he was labouring under as he prepared his English manuscript of Tommy McGinty's story of crow for publication was his sense that it was crucial that the "this Canadian indigenous story/charter be published by, and thus at least acknowledged and at last honoured by an important federal institution" such as the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

From its inception in 1972 until its last publication appeared in 2005, 143 titles have been published in the ethnology section of the Mercury Series. The bulk of them are either ethnology or archaeology monographs about various Canadian First Peoples. Included among them are several publications on Yukon Aboriginals by anthropologist Julie Cruikshank.

Regarding the Museum's publication of Tommy McGinty's story of crow Ms. Nicholette Prince, Curator, Plateau Ethnology for the Canadian Museum of Civilization⁷⁵ writes that 840 copies of the book were printed altogether, all of which have now been sold. The book's copyright has always been and is still owned by the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation. No royalties of any sort have ever been paid for this book to anyone. Ms. Prince does not know what may have been the precise criteria by which the Canadian Museum of Civilization decided to include a given manuscript in its Mercury Series in 1999, however, she states that submitted manuscripts are reviewed both internally and externally to determine if they would be a good fit with the types of scholarly publications done at Mercury. She suggests that the fact that the story of crow "related to the audio material deposited by D. Legros in 1984 probably had an impact in the Museum's decision to publish it⁷⁶." Ms. Prince states that all editing is done by the author prior to publication; Canadian Museum of Civilizations Corporation (CMCC) pays for design and printing. She further states that CMCC did not provide any copies

⁷⁵ Ms. Prince and I exchanged several emails regarding this subject in 2007 and 2008.

⁷⁶ The audio recordings of Tommy McGinty's narration and translation of the crow story (as well as many others of Legros' and McGinty's ethnographic encounters) are available for purchase by researchers through the CMC on-line catalogue of library and archives at www.civilization.ca. To expedite matters however, I found that the simplest way to begin one's search is to ask for guidance from Mr. Louis Campeau, CMC audiovisual archivist by email at louis.campeau@civilisations.ca or by telephone at (819) 776-8523

of the book to either the McGinty family or the Selkirk First Nation because this is considered the author's responsibility. In a recent personal communication, however, Dr. Legros stated that he "is certain that the Museum, through Deborah Brownrigg, sent ten of his copies directly to Pelly Crossing." Finally, Ms. Prince is unaware of any consultation of any sort either of the McGinty family or of the Selkirk First Nation Government of Pelly Crossing by CMCC in connection with the publication of *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow: a First Nation Elder Recounts the Creation of the World*.

THE BOOK'S FRONT AND BACK COVERS

The front cover of Legros' 1999 book⁷⁷ conveys a considerable amount of information, including, naturally, the book's title and author's name, though this is merely the obvious, or left brain portion of the message conveyed⁷⁸. The bulk of the message is far less obvious for it must be apprehended intuitively, as all pictorial art must be⁷⁹. Looking at the front cover, what one is likely to notice first of all are the two human figures appearing on the lower left and right hand sides respectively, thus framing

⁷⁷ See Appendix 1 for a scanned reproduction of the book's front and back covers, as well as a copy of an engraving based on Alexander Murray's original sketch that these Aboriginal figures are derived from.

⁷⁸ According to information appearing on page one of the Mercury Series publication, "The cover, conceived by Dominique Legros, is a pastiche of the turn-of-century book illustrations by the great Russian theatre decorator, illustrator, and painter, Ivan Iakovlevitch Bilibine. It integrates Alexander Murray's drawings of the Kutchin Indians (Richardson 1851), who are said to have been dressed like the Tutchone by Robert Campbell in 1850 (Wilson 1970). The illustration was executed by Fabrice Descurninges, a Montreal designer. fdescurninges@netscape.net"

⁷⁹ The interpretation that follows is of course a product of my own intuition and therefore entirely mine; others' intuition might differ and result in differing interpretations.

the front cover's bottom third where the author's name also appears. Dressed in fringed buckskin, moccasin-shod and clutching the sort of paraphernalia that Europeans readily associate with their kind (a skinning knife and a feather for the figure on the left and a hunting/war bow and quiver for the figure on the right); they are obviously meant to be recognised as North American Aboriginal males. And, should any doubt linger, the two feathers stuck into the hair at the back of the left-hand figure's head should clear any remaining doubts concerning the figures' identity, for between them they display all the essential attributes that Westerners have traditionally ascribed to North American "Indians".

The figures stand outside and in front of what appears to be a rough wooden archway inside of which are printed the title and the author's name, plus what could just as well be sky, water, clouds, or even a partly snow-covered landscape abutting a lake shore, and three or four tall spruce trees with a large raven in full flight among them. The inner side of this wooden archway is lined with a bright pink border. A red-eyed raven perches on it and makes it obvious that this pink lining is actually separated from the wood since the raven's tail protrudes underneath and inside the wooden archway. The archway is in effect a door onto an inner world in front of which stand the two Aboriginal figures, who seem to be in an intermediary position between the readers and this inner world where the raven flies and which, since their names are both included inside, also includes Tommy McGinty and Dominique Legros. Almost entirely excluded from this inner realm are five red-eyed ravens (though not quite entirely since the tail of one of them protrudes inside or at least in front of this realm). The Aboriginals and the

red-eyed ravens are thus definitely outside of the inner world of this trinity consisting of the world-restorer and law-giver, the wise elder and the ethnographer whose mission it is to make sense of it all for those who, like us and the two Aboriginal figures, find ourselves outside gazing in to this inner sanctum.

At the extreme upper right-hand corner of the wooden frame a strange, phallus-like object has literally burst through the thick wooden beam. Though many readers may well wonder what to make of it, a Tutchone (and careful readers) would readily recognise this as a pictorial representation of the *shra tsok* plant that figures so prominently in the "Crow's Mother-in-law" episode of the story of crow that McGinty narrated in his 1991 telling. In this episode (1999, 161-172), crow, who has had a glimpse of his mother-in-law's white legs, lusts after her and schemes to find some way of making love to her. Since this is normally quite impossible (because it directly contravenes crow's own law and is therefore the breaking of a major taboo), he resorts to tricking her into dropping her pants, turning around and "sitting" onto a *shra tsok* sticking out of the thick moss. Unbeknownst to her, however, he has previously concealed himself under that moss and it is he who holds the penis-like plant up through the moss carpet. When, as he has previously instructed her to, she drops her pants, turns around and squats down, crow withdraws the *shra tsok* and replaces it with his own erect penis with which he enters his squatting mother-in-law. In other words, this quiet, bucolic-seeming inner world is so laden with pent up sexuality that it is literally bursting out through its frame. I believe that this cover is an allegory of what Legros means to do with this book. The flying raven represents the ancient

wisdom of the Tutchone; Tommy McGinty is its modern embodiment; Dominique Legros is the trained academic who will interpret it all for us and for the Tutchone who, by virtue of recently having adhered to Western beliefs and practices, have excluded themselves from the inner world and now require ethnography's help to relearn what their ancestors knew. We, the European and Euro-Canadian readers, are in a position similar to theirs, except at one further remove since we are not directly concerned. Perched on treetops and on the top of the wooden arch, the five outer ravens are facing us squarely, their red-hot glowing eyes challenging us to enter the world of crow and the traditional Tutchone and to accept it as at least equal to, and in some ways perhaps, superior to our own. Finally, the wood-bursting *shra tsok* is an invitation to accept our sexuality as a necessary and normal part of who we are, something which the Tutchone have always accepted according to Dominique Legros (see for example 1999, 37-8), and as illustrated by several of the episodes summarised in the previous chapter; though, judging by current Tutchone reception of his publication, many contemporary Tutchone would now disagree with his assessment.

The back cover, as can be seen in Appendix 1, reproduces precisely the imagery featured on the front cover, with the exception that the colours inside the archway are washed out to the point where the trees and the flying raven can only be discerned with difficulty. This was obviously meant to make the text of Julie Cruikshank's comment and the short biographic note about the author⁸⁰ easier to read.

⁸⁰ Note that in spite of Tommy McGinty's extensive contribution, on the book's cover, only Dominique Legros receives credit as the book's author. This, as we will shortly see, is also true for Gallimard's publication of Legros' French translation of this book.

THE BOOK

The book begins with a one-page abstract. This is followed by one and one half pages of acknowledgements, first thanking Professor Legros' major informants in the various Northern Tutchone villages, including Tommy McGinty of Pelly Crossing. Legros then thanks the research assistants who transcribed his field-research tapes and, finally, his proofreaders. The book is dedicated to his daughter and to the memory of "Linda Joe and Robert Alfred, two Tutchone friends who died in 1990-91 at the peak of their youth" (Legros 1999, 10). Then a page-long excerpt from a 1939 Zora Neale Hurston short story (*Moses, Man of the Mountain*) serves as epigraph. This is followed by the table of content and a one-page linguistic description of the Northern Tutchone language. Then comes an 18-page foreword, followed by a 10-page introduction. Tommy McGinty's story of crow occupies the next 136 pages. This is followed by an 82-page afterword⁸¹. A bibliography closes the book.

REGARDING THE TRANSCRIPTIONS

Only the audio recordings of McGinty's English tellings/self-translations were transcribed. These transcriptions were produced by Dr.

⁸¹ In the Foreword and Afterword, Legros describes the ethnography of the Northern Tutchone, explains how he textualized McGinty's oral narrative and suggests ways in which the text might eventually be re-oralized by future Tutchone storytellers.

Legros' undergraduate student research assistants⁸². Verification of several random samples shows the transcriptions' accuracy to be fairly good. The word "inaudible" does appear occasionally, but a transcription in which only occasional words are deemed inaudible could be considered better than average, except that there are several, less apparent, problems: my verification of some of these transcriptions against the original tapes reveals that the transcribers sometimes failed to hear certain words or phrases. In addition, some of the repetitions are omitted entirely, in spite of the fact that one of the most typical features of oral storytelling is the repetition of words, phrases and whole sentences for emphasis and effect—and Tommy McGinty's storytelling is no exception. Finally, for some of the episodes, some short exchanges between Dominique Legros and Tommy McGinty, clearly heard on the recording, have not been transcribed, possibly because the transcribers considered them irrelevant. However, nothing is ever irrelevant in such exchanges, and given that virtually all of them are directly related in one way or another to the crow story and McGinty's telling of it, their non-transcription is arbitrary (since some were transcribed and some not) and constitutes a definite loss⁸³. When I write that nothing is ever irrelevant, I mean that a storyteller's choosing to repeat a word, phrase or entire sentence, sometimes again and again during a single episode, is not

⁸² Dr. Legros told me that in addition to the August 1984 self-translation, the January 9, 10, and February 5, 1991 tellings were also transcribed and that he distilled his published version out of both. When the time came to give me copies of all of these transcriptions, however, he could not locate those from 1991 and I therefore only have copies of the August 1984 self-translation transcriptions. This means that even though I have copies of the taped recordings of the 1991 tellings and have produced my own transcriptions of them, I have no possible way of verifying the quality and accuracy of the student transcriptions of McGinty's 1991 telling of the crow story.

⁸³ It is not up to student transcribers to decide what is relevant and what is not; that responsibility belongs to the anthropologist who employs them.

done gratuitously or randomly. A storyteller uses repetition for a variety of reasons, including emphasis, reminder, punctuation, interlude, or even as a launching pad from which all the better to deliver a punch line or a startling new development. A thorough transcription should record all of these. When a break in the narration occurs (whether to light a cigarette, refresh a stale plug of chewing tobacco, to accommodate a bout of throat clearing and tobacco juice spitting, because a neighbour comes in unexpectedly, a grandchild starts to cry loudly or because the dogs tied outside the camp are suddenly heard to bark excitedly or simply to have a drink of tea—all typical interruptions that can be clearly heard—and seen as well on the videocassettes at various times—and the ethnographer is forced to recap to get the narration restarted, this should also be clearly recorded in the transcription. This is especially important when such transcriptions are used as the basis for textualization for future publication. Given that an important part of the published version of Tommy McGinty's story of crow is based upon these transcriptions, its accuracy is necessarily affected by the quality of the transcriptions that it is based upon. I found the transcription of the foggy woman episode to be among those exhibiting the highest quality of transcription. It is therefore this episode that I have chosen to include in the thesis, starting with Dr. Legros' student's transcription of the 1984 McGinty self translation⁸⁴. This is followed with my own re-transcription of the same 1984 McGinty tape for readers who wish to compare them. Finally, I have

⁸⁴ Note that a sentence by sentence discussion of Dr. Legros' research assistant's transcription of the bow shooting contest between crow and tuundye is included at the end of this chapter. To avoid repetition, I will not be discussing the quality of the foggy woman episode except to point out that in my view, the quality of the foggy woman episode student transcription is somewhat better than that of the bow shooting contest episode.

included my own transcription of McGinty's "private" 1991 episode so that readers can see for themselves the differences between the two tellings.

STUDENT TRANSCRIPTION OF TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1984 SELF TRANSLATION OF HIS
FOGGY WOMAN EPISODE

T.M.

And after that, he walking down again. Pretty soon he found one woman there, really nice looking girl. Nice looking woman, nice tit, tit just sticking out, you know. And nice leg, nice fat leg. Crow see it. Oh gosh, he said, geez... □

D.L.

That's foggy lady there. □

T.M. Foggy woman. Gee, he said, you got nice leg and nice tit, he said. My God, where you come from, anyhow? Oh, he said, I live here all the time. That's what I do, I make my living. And he said there, you married? You got man? He said no, I got no man, nothing. He said, how about I stay with you? He say, I don't know, I think so, you can stay with me. And he stay inside his camp there. By gosh, he say, I wish it get dark quick. □

D.L.: [laughs]. □

T.M.: We make love quick, he said. And that woman there he said, I don't know

that kind too myself, he told him. He said, I'll show you! I show you how to do it, he said. And after that, he throw his blanket in. We use my blanket for sleep on top and your blanket, we use it for mattress, he said. My blanket nice and warm. And he said, take all your clothes out, I take all my clothes out too. Bare naked, they go inside blanket. And crow started fooling around with her. And that foggy woman there said, what are you doing anyway, what do you do that for? And then he said, what for you pee on me? He said, that's

the way, that's the way you gotta do, he say. When man come to you, they gotta use you that way. Using woman for, he said. He sucking tit and everything there. Woman tit... and they make good love. □

D.L.: Ok, just wait. Who pee on him? Woman she pee on crow, or crow he pee on woman? □

T.M.: He pee on woman, he pee inside, I guess. He shoot up, that's what he mean. □

D.L.: Ok, Ok. □

T.M.: And he said, maybe next time I do that to you, you gonna go after me, you gonna love me real hard. □

[end of tape 14, side A] □

[Same tape side B]

T.M.: And after that, they stay together. They fishing, and then that frog woman boat... □

D.L.: Fog. □

T.M.: Not frog woman, foggy woman, he got good boat. And gee, he said, where you get that? What kind that, he said, that nalat. Nalat, he mean that's

boat. He say, where you get it from? He say, I make it myself. Gee, he say, he never see that kind of job on it before all his life, ever since he was born on this earth, he said. You done pretty good job. He say, I gonna make one too. Which way you make it? He say I make it that way, I do it like that. They go around, and they fishing. They get more fish and they stay there, they

dry fish. They dry salmon, cut them up. Pretty soon he told his wife, put your dress up little higher up to above your knee. He say, so you can get the cold draft, cold air between your leg, you know, all like that. And other way you get sweat, you get smell, he said. And his shirt, he wear the short sleeves too, turn over fish [inaudible at 092] like that. Pretty soon he see the hair under his arm, yellow.□

D.L.: Hair, yeah.□

T.M.: Hair, yellow hair he see. That crow there, he sat down. Ah-ha, ha, ha, he say, he laugh. His wife there say, what kind you laugh for? He said, I just laugh, he said. Under your arm, and there's lots of hair, he said. Brown one, brown colour, he said. And then he turn to fog, he started go down back to river. He try and grab him, try to grab him. Go right in there, he drag him right into river, right in the lake there. And he hear another noise behind, fish coming from behind. Just like a fish come back to life. Open up his mouth, and the fish shooting inside there, inside his mouth, and he shoot out in the asshole again. Just go right clean through on there.□

D.L.: Who do that?□

T.M.: Fish go right through crow.□

D.L.: Fish, he go right through the crow?□

T.M.: Yeah, open his mouth like that. He come on down this way. He going back behind that foggy woman. And then the two roll, and the [inaudible at 128] up there, on the rack. And crow jump up on there, he get the stick. That one started break open too, come back life again. He kill them all. After that, he take that boat, he jump inside his boat.□

D.L.: Ok, all the fish on the rack, they start to be alive again.□

T.M.: Huh?□

D.L.: I don't get it. Just wait... □

T.M.: All the fish come back alive after that... □

D.L.: After that lady go away.□

T.M.: The lady go, foggy lady.□

D.L.: Yeah, but what I don't get is how come crow, he go back to shore, and he

see a fish coming?□

T.M.: This woman here, he run away from crow, from camp, from right here.□

D.L.: Ok.□

T.M.: Right there in the water here. And the woman, then he try to grab him, he go right clean through his hand, he can't hold him. He go right clean through.□

D.L.: Another time.□

T.M.: He talk nice into river, on the lake he go out on the fog, he turn to fog here. While he's here, this fish here all hanging down the rack, come back alive. Started fall behind him. And crow hear that, he turn around. Fish coming down, he's open his mouth. He shoot right out from inside.□

D.L.: Oh, yeah.□

T.M.: After that, another bottle up there, he take a club, he club him down there. And that one, he's safe. And he went back to that boat again. His wife stand on top on water, over there. He go inside that boat. He falling all over place, he can't get him. And pretty soon he get mad, get mad for good,

crow. That woman, he said, good love woman get away from me. That's my fault, he said, I should have said something like that, I should have talked good. I make good love with that woman after that, he say, very good.□

D.L.: So he feel sorry.□

T.M.: And he very sorry. Now he go away from me, he said. I don't know what

to do. And after that he follow him again, he try to talk to him, nothing. So he got mad. He say, you foggy woman, he say, I look under your arm, lots of hair. Between your leg lots of brown hair, he said. Under your arm too. Lots of lousy [sic] too, I see it there too, he said. Now, he said, get mad at me now. Don't think of me no more, no more I think of you, he said. He come back, he eat all that fish up, from there he go out again. I think that's the time he went inside the submarine.□

D.L.: Ok. Finish the story now, keep on.□

T.M.: And that crow story, I still talk about that same story yet. And then he walking down in the shore again.

MY OWN RE-TRANSCRIPTION OF TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1984 SELF TRANSLATION OF THE FOGGY WOMAN EPISODE

(episode starts at 26:24 of tape side A)

TM: After that he walking down again. And pretty soon, he found, he found, a... he found a one woman there. Real nice looking girl. Nice looking woman. Nice tit. Tits just sticking out, you know. And nice leg, nice fat leg. Crow see it. Oh, gosh, he said! Geez!

DL: Foggy... foggy lady there?

TM: Foggy... (laughs) Foggy woman.

DL: O.K.

TM: He said, huh, gee, he said, you got nice leg, nice tit. He say my god, where you come from anyhow? Oh, he said, I living here all the time. That's what I do, I make my living. And he said there, do you married? You got man? He said no, I got no man, nothing. He said, huh, how about I stay with you? He say I don't think so... I think so, you can stay with me. And he stayed inside his camp there. By gosh, he said, I wish it get dark quick.

DL: (laughs)

TM: We making love quick, he said. And that woman there that he said, I don't know that kind too myself he told him. He said I show you. I show you how to do it, he said. And after that he throw his blanket in. We'll use, we'll use my blanket for sleep on top, you, you, you blanket we use for mattress, he said. My blanket nice and warm. And he said take all your clothes out, I take all my clothes out too. Bare naked, they go inside blanket. And crow start to fool around, fool around with her. And that foggy woman there, what you doing,

what you doing that for? And then, he said, what for, what for you pee on me? He said that's the way, that's the way you gotta do, he said. When, when, when man come to you, they gotta use you that way. He using woman for, he said. He sucking tit, and everything there (laughs), woman tit, he, he, and they make good love...

DL: O.K. just wait; who pee on him, huh... woman she pee on crow or crow he pee on woman?

TM: He pee on woman, he pee inside, I guess...

DL: Oh!

TM: He shoot off, that's what he say I guess...

DL: O.K.

TM: And he said the... there maybe next time I do it to you, you goin' go after me, you goin' love me real hard you see...

DL: O.K. just wait...

(end of tape)

(new tape (side B) at 0:00)

DL: O.K. Tommy.

TM: And, after the that, they stay together. They fishing. And then that fog woman boat...

DL: Frog, frog, hey?

TM: Not frog woman; foggy, foggy woman. He got good boat. And he said there, where you get that, what kind is that? He said nylat, and nylat he mean that's boat. He said where you get it from? He said I make him myself. Gee, he said, he say he never see, see that kind of a job done it before all his life! Ever since he was born onto this earth, he said. You done pretty good job. He say I'm gonna make one too. Which way you make it? He say I make it that way; I do like that. They go round then they fishing. They get more fish, and they, they stay there; they dry fish. They dry salmon. Cut 'em up. Pass on his wife. He told his wife (stammers) put your dress just a little higher, up to above your knee. He say you, so you can get cold draught, cold air between your leg you know like that and other way you get sweat, you get smell, he said. And this shirt he wear they short sleeve too, turn over fish and fish like, like that; pretty soon he see that in the hair under his arm, yellow.

DL: Hair, yeah?

TM: Hair, yellow hair he see. That crow, the there he sat down. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, he laugh. His wife he say, what kind you laugh for? He said, huh, I just laugh, he said; under your arm, and there, lots of hair, he said, brown one, brown colour, he said. And that, that, that he turn to fog, he start go down back to river. He try and grab him, try and grab him, go right into him, drag him right

into river, right in the lake. And he hear another noise behind; fish coming down behind him. It just like fish coming back live. Open all his mouth, and fish he shoot inside there, inside there, in, in, inside there, inside his mouth and he shoot out in the asshole again. Just go right clean through on him.

DL: Who do that?

TM: Fish go right through crow.

DL: Fish he go right through the crow?

TM: Yeah. Open his mouth, like that, he come him down this way. He going back behind the that, and huh, foggy woman. Another two roll, another two bundle pack on there on the rack. And crow he jump up on the there, he get a stick. That one start a break open too, come back live again.

DL: Huh, huh.

TM: He kill 'em all. After the, the that, he take the that boat, jump inside his boat...

DL: He just, huh, oh, all the fish on the rack they start to be alive again?

TM: Huh?

DL: I don't get it. Just wait.

TM: All the fish come back alive after that...

DL: ...lady go away...

TM: ...lady go here in the lake...

DL: How come... what I don't get is how come crow he go back to shore? And he see a fish coming?

TM: This woman here he run out, and he run away from crow, from camp and that here, hey...

DL: O.K.

TM: ...and right in the water here. And woman when he try to grab him, he go right clean through his hand, he can't hold him. Go right clean through. He talk nice into to river and the lake, he go out in the fog, he turn to fog here. He, and why he hear this fish here, all hanging down the rack, come back live, start to follow behind him, and fish he, and huh, crow he hear that, he turn around. Fish coming down. He open his mouth. He shoot right off in inside.

DL: Oh yeah, O.K.

TM: After that some 'nother bundle up there, he took a club, he club 'em down there, and that one he save and he run back to that boat again. His wife standing on top of water over there. He go inside that boat. He follow all over the place; he can't get 'em. And pretty soon he, he get mad. Get mad for good,

crow. That woman, gee, he said, good, good, good love woman, get away from me. That's my fault, he said. I shouldn't say those things like that, I should have talked, talked good. I make good love with that woman after that he say, very good.

DL: He feel sorry.

TM: And he really very sorry. Now he go away from me, he said. I don't know what to do. And after that he follow him again, he try and talk to him: nothing. So he got mad. He told him, he said you, and the foggy, foggy woman, he say I look under your arm, he said lotsa hair. Between your leg, lotsa brown hair, he said. Under your arm too. Lots of lousy too, I see a the there too, he said. Now he said, get mad at me now; don't think of me no more; no more I think of you, he said. He come back. He, he eat all of the that, that fish up. From there he go again.

(end of episode at 6:07 side B)

MY TRANSCRIPTION OF TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1991 NARRATION OF THE FOG WOMAN
EPISODE IN REHEARSAL FOR THE YUKON COLLEGE COURSE

(Start of episode at 14 :24)

TM : After all he finished there, from there, he go out again. He walk, he walk by, by river again. And he sees huh some woman she stay there. Nice looking woman. He come in there. He sit down from him. Wo...woman got lots of dry fish. He say, you make lotsa fish. He say, yah, that's how work hard, I work hard for my living. He said, huh, do you married? No, he said. Do you need man? I need man, but where I gone get it from? He say, I'm here. Can I get marry you? What kind are you? Wolf. Me crow! Oh, we just right, he said.

DL: Huh, huh.

TM: I stay with you. He say O.K. go ahead. And then bring (stammers) bring your stuff in. And he cook, he feed him. And they fishing. They fishing; they fishing; they work. Pretty soon he wipe his face again. I sweat, he says. He said, turn the rest... I'm tired now to turn over that fish. So his wife turn over fish, he see hair under here.

DL: Under her armpit, yeah...

TM: Yeah, under her arm, yellow hair.

DL: Huh, huh.

TM: Heyah, heyah, heyah, heyah, he laughed! Heyah, heyah, heyah, heyah, heyah, he said. He said, what kind you laugh for? He say I laugh for you for I laugh at you. What's the matter? I see that there, you, you, you hair in under your arm it's a yellow; the first time I see that kind, he says. Ah so... he say O.K. I gonna go away. He go down. He grab him. He go right through. Go down to the river. Pretty soon the fish all come back. Come back alive.

DL: Huh, huh.

TM: And then...

DL: Fish on the rack, you mean?

TM: Yeah. Dragging, dragging whole bundle all tied up everything bucking the hell up on the rack, some of them hanging down, sticking out he just jump in the river. He open his mouth. His wife is across there. Open his mouth, fish jump inside there; right through and out in the asshole! Fish he just stinging right clean through! Can't do nothing! He can't stop 'em there nothing from rolling on out. Two bundle tied up. He get a club. He club 'em down. He got that one. And he jump in the boat, canoe. His wife go round, park here, way over cross the ocean. Follow around, my wife, come on, he said, come back. Come back. Come back. No, nothing. Pretty soon he get mad. (Says a whole sentence in Tutchone)

D.L. What that mean, that one?

TM: Under... lousy.

DL: (Laughs) lousy...

TM: Lousy laid... all the young ones, white ones, he says. Egg, lousy egg.

DL: Huh, huh, under her armpit.

TM: Yeah. And huh... and they smell bad too, he says. He can go for good, he says. And after that he come back. He eat that fish. And from there he go out again. I guess he trying to find out see where some good people are staying.

(end of episode at 18:38)

FROM THE ORAL TO THE WRITTEN: DOMINIQUE LEGROS' EDITORIAL CHOICES

In the previous chapter I provided examples and discussed the kinds of gains and losses observed in Tommy McGinty's self-translated English-language version compared to his 1984 telling in his own native Northern Tutchone. I will now discuss those that occurred in the process of Dominique Legros' textualization of the version that was published by the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1999. An important part of this textualization was

distilled out of two separate transcriptions. The first was that of Mr. McGinty's 1984 self-translation. The second was that of a retelling in English in 1991 by Tommy McGinty for the sole benefit of Dominique Legros and his tape recorder as a rehearsal in preparation for his final retelling in English before Yukon College students in Pelly Crossing. Dominique Legros explains that he strove most of all to ensure that the written version of the story of crow "flows" as naturally possible, while losing as little as possible of any event or information contained in each instance of telling (1999, 227-8). This is entirely in keeping with standard traditional ethnographic practice. Recall Claude Lévi-Strauss' well-known postulate that "there is no single 'true' version [of a myth] of which all the others are but copies or distortions. Every version belongs to the myth" (1963, 218). And in his textualization process Dominique Legros does ensure that virtually nothing of any sort of ethnographic significance from any of the known versions gets lost.

Legros provides a detailed description of how he produced his final textualization of the episode in which crow marries fog woman. He shows how the 1984 and 1991 audiotaped episodes complement one another in that each focuses predominantly on one of two different aspects of crow's desires in relation to the fog woman. In 1984, as can be seen in the above transcriptions, McGinty emphasized the crow's sexual appetite and how sexually desirable he found the lady and how he couldn't wait to make love to her and how he initiated her to physical love-making. In his 1991 private rehearsal telling, as can also be seen in the above transcription, it was the lady's skill at catching and drying fish, and at boat building that was emphasized. Both versions end exactly the same way, with crow mocking his

wife's underarm hair and her leaving him, but as Legros states, the fact that each version is so differently oriented would make it almost illegitimate to meld them together into a single episode, however, "In his public performance with students, which was given a week or so after the taping of the 1991 audio version, [McGinty] kept the theme of crow's hunger for food but reintroduced the motif of crow's urgent desire for sex. In these conditions, [Legros] felt quite safe in assuming that merging the two versions was sound" (1999, 222).

Note however that Legros' ultimate English text is not taken exclusively from the actual transcriptions of the story of crow. Some important passages are inferred from visual details that Legros recalled having seen during his audio recording of McGinty's narration or self-translation (*ibid.* 217); others can be seen in the Yukon College course videotapes. Legros provides the following example of the latter:

Another example of precision based on visual information may be found in the passage where crow is trying to convince the [fog] woman to take him in as a husband. The written version describes him as raising his hands and grabbing one of the woman's thighs. Nowhere is this mentioned in the transcripts of the oral versions. However, this is what Mr. McGinty mimed in his public narration to the students, which was video-taped. He rose from his chair, walked to a huge wooden pillar in the band office hall, raised his hands and embraced the pillar high up with both arms and hands expressing how soft the thigh was by rubbing one of his cheeks against the pillar and making everybody burst out laughing. By raising his arms and hands he also ridiculed crow's pretensions by making him appear as a dwarf who can hardly reach the height of the thighs of the woman he is lusting after (*ibid.*).

Still other details—or perhaps more properly, explanations—are taken from elucidations the storyteller supplied in the course of various ethnographic encounters, many of which had nothing whatever to do with the narration of the crow story (*ibid.* 221). To avoid footnotes altogether, Legros

included ethnographic details that he inserted into the text of the story according to “how Mr. McGinty answered my questions and, after his death, how I imagined he would have elaborated” (*ibid.* 219).

Finally, Legros standardized the text’s English grammar and syntax. This is particularly noticeable in the correction of McGinty’s use of gender-marking pronouns. Such pronouns do not exist in Tutchone. As a result, as can be seen in the above transcriptions, elders such as Tommy McGinty—and even Lizzie Hall, though to a lesser extent—use “he” and “she” indifferently and interchangeably so that a woman is just as often referred to as “he” as she’s referred to as “she”, and the same pronoun interchange is sometimes also true when referring to males, though this appears to be rarer. Consequently, it can sometimes be puzzling just who is doing what to whom whenever a Tutchone narrator refers to more than one character of both genders in a single sentence. Legros has therefore “corrected” all of Tommy McGinty’s use of pronouns. In addition, he also corrected McGinty’s wildly eccentric English grammar and syntax, in part to make the reading easier for Euro-Canadians, but also because he feels that to not do so might have “displeased younger First nation students who speak English perfectly well—they find that publishing their elders in broken English makes their old people sound pretty stupid” (*ibid.* 214-5). But to thus standardize an elder’s English amounts to purging it of all traces of the Tutchone grammar and syntax that all Tutchone elders’ English retains. It amounts to making Tutchone elders sound and read like poorly educated Euro-Canadians, and nothing at all like the Northern Tutchone grandmothers and grandfathers of these “younger

First nation students who speak English perfectly well”, and who may not even recognise their elders in such unlikely disguise.

RECEPTION OF LEGROS' ENGLISH PUBLICATION

I have found three reviews of Dominique Legros' English publication of Tommy McGinty's story of crow. The first was written by anthropologist Guy Lanoue. It appeared in 1999 in the Canadian anthropology periodical, *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*. Dr. Lanoue's review is generally praiseful of this publication that he compares with Julie Cruikshank's *Life Lived Like a Story*. He writes that Cruikshank's and Legros' books are complementary because, in his view, the words of the Aboriginal storytellers reproduced in *Life Lived Like a Story* are closer to the raw transcription of the original telling, while the words of Tommy McGinty come off as more polished because they are a synthesis of three separately recorded tellings over several years, supplemented by Legros' own "intuitive" interpretations of McGinty's words. Lanoue nevertheless insists that this is a co-authored book. He credits the entire story of crow to Tommy McGinty alone, and Legros with only the authorship of the book's foreword and afterword (Lanoue 1999).

The second review appeared in the *Journal de la Société des Américanistes*. It was written by Giovanna Carrarini, and also appeared in 1999. Carrarini praises the book's author for not representing the Other in opposition to Us but writing "with them and for them rather than about them" (439—my translation), and for banishing the word "myth" from the entire book, "first because its use could induce readers to forge a link (tisser un lien)

between the Tutchone story of the creation of the world and a potential structuralist interpretation (which the author avoids repeatedly); moreover, it could impart a status to this tale that the Tutchone themselves would impute to the arrogance of those who do not believe in it" (439-440—my translation). She adds that Legros also deserves praise for having recognised the limitations of anthropology and having never lost sight of the fact that "one of the book's main goals is to teach and to celebrate Tutchone culture" (440—my translation), before cautioning that Legros is clearly responsible for this written version of the crow story because "it is based on an assemblage of several oral versions by a single narrator narrating to ever different audiences" (ibid.). She further cautions that the very existence of this published version runs the risk of becoming the text against which any new oral narration will henceforth be judged, and thus lose one of the foremost characteristics of oral tradition, its great adaptability that allows it to adjust to and even incorporate recent sociocultural developments, and its ability to renew the culture along with it.

The third review, published in 2001 in the *Journal of American Folklore* by Cynthia L. Ainsworth, is the least positive of the three. Ainsworth argues that "At best, the published texts can be viewed as an old-fashioned anthropological synthesis of Legros and McGinty thinking together about the significance of the Raven cycle;" however, "Not permitting readers the opportunity to examine McGinty's choices in audience-specific text creation is a significant loss" (493). She concludes that:

The Story of Crow will be useful for American scholars as a limited resource and a reminder that those who get the chance to work with the dwindling core of subarctic Athabaskan storytellers have a responsibility to document as much indigenous interpretive data as possible. As American

scholars are trained to know, indigenous populations are no longer apt to accept undocumented academic interpretations. Even as Legros struggles to acknowledge McGinty's invaluable and unique perspective, that perspective has been forever obscured by the professional choices and assumptions behind his presentation of the texts (*ibid.*).

One of my principal reasons for travelling to Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone village home of Pelly Crossing in 2006 was to try and determine just how Mr. McGinty's family and SFN Government representatives had received the two publications of his story of crow. Just before I left Montreal, Professor Legros had suggested that Mr. McGinty's daughter was annoyed that he had included some coarse language (*gros mots*) in the English-language publication. He'd suggested that this was perhaps due to her Christian education at the hands of missionaries, but he did not appear to believe that it was a serious matter. It was therefore not a complete surprise to me when the representatives of the McGinty family wasted no time broaching the subject at our first formal meeting. I was however very much taken aback at the vehemence of the charges directed at Legros. Much the same concerns were raised in later meetings with SFN Government representatives. Briefly summarised, here are their main grievances: 1. Dominique did not have our permission to publish Tommy McGinty's stories; 2. Dominique made lots of money from the sale of his books of Tommy McGinty's stories and he has kept all that money for himself, without sharing any of the royalties with those whose stories they are. When we asked him about the royalties he told us the book stores took it all and never gave him any; that book is in all the colleges and that's not right: it's the elders who should have got the royalties, not Dominique; 3. We are very angry that Dominique has made our elder use dirty words in the English book.

It's impossible for one of our elders to use these kinds of words in a translation of a story in the Northern Tutchone language. There are no words like those English dirty words in Northern Tutchone. Our Northern Tutchone language has no dirty words at all. So it's got to be Dominique who added those words. Tommy can't have said them because he didn't even know them. Our elders don't even know about those kinds of words⁸⁵.

DOMINIQUE LEGROS' 2003 CONSTRAINTS

During a day-long March 25, 2008 interview Dominique Legros and I discussed (among many other things) his translation of his English-language publication of Tommy McGinty's story of crow into French at some length. He told me that this was his very first attempt at translating a major text and that he had no previous professional translation experience of any sort other than occasionally helping an English-speaking colleague translate a sentence or two into French. He also told me that he had not previously appreciated just how complex and difficult translation actually is and how so very inadequately book translators are paid for their work.

As is often the case with first time translators, Legros soon realised he'd underestimated the amount of work translating a creative work such as the story of crow would entail⁸⁶. The part that caused him the greatest difficulties was translating the "coarse language" (gros mots). Since he was

⁸⁵ My investigation of the merits of these charges has revealed that they are largely groundless and a result of the McGinty family's and SFN government's mistaken beliefs regarding academic publishing on the one hand, and a wish to posthumously sanitize the language of its patriarch on the other. For a draft copy of my report to the McGinty family regarding this matter, see Appendix 4.

⁸⁶ Personal communication, March 25, 2008.

translating for a French publisher and because he is French himself, it was only natural for him to render Mr. McGinty's own Northern Tutchone inflected version of Euro-Canadian English crude words into what seemed to him the closest French equivalent. Once he was satisfied with this translation he mailed it to Jean Grosjean⁸⁷, who soon wrote back that it didn't work at all, arguing that his translation made his Amerindian appear to be Parisian, that he had embellished (*fleuri*) his language compared to his original English, and that his language was much too refined (*policé*). Legros then replaced the French crude words with equivalent Québécois words and sent that version off to Grosjean, who then told him by telephone that this was much better because it created distance between the narrator and the French readers. But then, according to Dominique Legros, a friend and colleague, anthropologist Pierrette Désy, convinced him not to use Québécois idiom after all because while this may create distance for French readers, it does not work at all for Québécois readers who know very well that Tommy McGinty was not a Québécois and would find it disconcerting to hear Québécois *gros mots* in the mouth of a Yukon Aboriginal elder. Legros says that he then wrote back to Grosjean to tell him that under the circumstances he would prefer to omit all of Tommy McGinty's use of crude language. He reports that Grosjean agreed to that compromise. Pierrette Désy nevertheless suggested that he should simply leave the English coarse words un-translated; after all, she argued, English was the language in which

⁸⁷ Jean Grosjean and Jean-Marie-Gustave Le Clézio are co-directors of Gallimard's *l'Aube des peuples* collection in which Dominique Legros' translation of the story of crow was published.

the narrator-translator actually uttered them in his self-translation. Legros opted not to explore that possibility.

In English Legros had strived to make Tommy McGinty appear as a “man of the people (*un homme du peuple*) and an indigenous person (*un Amérindien*), who had neither a secondary, nor a college education⁸⁸. This is what he also strived to achieve in his French translation. In English he also preserved certain markers that would signal to readers that McGinty’s first language was not English—“Crow, that means Ts’ehki,” rather than “Ts’ehki, that means crow”—because an English speaker would have used the latter, but not so a native Tutchone speaker like Mr. McGinty. This statement, occurring at the very beginning of the story of crow in English (1999, 43), was rendered almost (but not quite) word for word in Legros’s French translation—“Corbeau, ça veut dire ts’ehki chez nous” (2003, 55). Such markers recur throughout the text, both in French and in English.

Finally, on page 10 of the Gallimard publication, in the “Remerciements” section, Legros wrote:

Nicolas Cousineau, un violoncelliste classique, m’a aidé à mettre des vibrations et du rythme dans la version française. La langue de Molière ayant du mal à ne pas se faire chic, nous avons souvent dû la déshabiller pour lui remettre une tenue de tous les jours. Il m’a cependant fallu renoncer à adapter vers le français les formes a-syntaxiques de certaines phrases de la version originale qui reproduisaient l’anglais que parlait M. McGinty — formes a-syntaxiques qui étaient elles-mêmes des calques de la stylistique de la langue tutchone (2003, 10)⁸⁹.

⁸⁸ But even to make Tommy McGinty appear to have neither a secondary nor a college education amounts to suggesting that he had a primary education, a gross exaggeration since he was in fact quite illiterate.

⁸⁹ Nicolas Cousineau, a classical cellist, helped me put vibrations and rhythm in the French version. Because Molière’s language finds it hard not to dress in style, we often had to undress it all the better to re-clothe it in everyday garb. I nevertheless had to give up on adapting into French certain asyntactic original sentences that reproduced the English spoken by Mr. McGinty—asyntactic forms of English that were in fact calques of Tutchone stylistics (My translation).

From the foregoing it is possible to deduce several of Dominique Legros' goals and constraints. One of his principal professional goals, as stated in his own departmental biography⁹⁰, is "promoting international recognition of the importance of cultural diversity worldwide, and awareness of the coevalness (correspondence) of cultures." In non-anthropological, layperson's terms, what this means is that Dr. Legros has dedicated much of his professional career to defending the proposition that all human cultures that exist at any given time (including ours) are not only contemporary but all equally products of long and delicate processes of adaptation to ever changing environments. There is no such thing as a static culture. All cultures are constantly undergoing change. Aboriginal Peoples are neither "primitives", nor "people that time forgot", any more than they are "people without history", and definitely not representatives of what our own remote ancestors may have been like tens of thousands of years ago. They are our contemporaries and our equals, a proposition that traditional ethnography has not always fully endorsed, though the "new" ethnography and Dominique Legros both do.

In the course of our lengthy March 25, 2008 conversation, Dr. Legros told me that he once showed Tommy McGinty a book published by fellow ethnographer Julie Cruikshank featuring stories told by Aboriginal elders from southern Yukon, many of which he read aloud for him. Mr. McGinty held the book in his own hands. Legros told him that he would put his own stories in a book like that. He not only approved, stated Legros, but he was also proud of the idea. Legros added that this attitude is typical of the Tutchone culture,

⁹⁰ See footnote 69

where wanting “to make a name for oneself” has always been an important trait—didn’t crow himself enjoin his nephew, koshekok, “to make a name for himself by bringing back a hot spark from far out at sea so the people would have fire?” (This is repeated in Legros 1999, 106-7.) “Mr. McGinty was pleased at the idea of making a name for himself with his stories put into books,” concluded Legros.

The translation of the *gros mots* is revealing. Dr. Legros’ successive attempts at satisfying, first, his l’Aube des peuples editor’s demands that he create “distance” between his Aboriginal narrator and his French readers, and his later bowing to his Québec colleague’s objection, graphically illustrate one of the major constraints under which he was labouring. His own instinctive and professional inclination was to make Tommy McGinty and his world as familiar and understandable as he could for his fellow French men and women. Hence his rendering of Tommy McGinty’s low register English words by their nearest natural equivalent low register French words. Few translation scholars would find fault with that. It is after all what we routinely try to instil in our students: any given utterance in the source language should be translated with the nearest natural equivalent utterance in the target language. Tommy McGinty’s peculiar, highly inflected with Tutchone, Euro-Canadian English has no close equivalent in French, but Legros was correct; in France, the nearest natural equivalent would be the French langue populaire franco-française spoken by the French lower classes. But one can imagine the alarm bells going off in Grosjean’s mind when he first read

Legros' original translation⁹¹. Not only did it make Tommy McGinty sound like a Parisian, even worse, it made him sound like an illiterate urban dwelling person of the lower classes. How could such a person be included in Gallimard's prestigious l'Aube des peuples collection? In itself, such a book might not be devoid of interest, but it certainly would not belong in a prestigious collection like l'Aube des peuples, a collection dedicated to publishing the words of the best storytellers of various "sauvages"⁹² of the world's remote regions (MOD) together with the best early oral narrators of various Western civilizations such as they were recorded in writing for the first time. The very name of the collection that Gallimard devotes to publishing the words of "savages" could hardly be more revealing: "l'Aube des peuples" (the dawn of peoples—underlining added). Any denotations and connotations derived from such a name can only point to peoples whose development has been arrested at its very beginning, or "dawn" and has remained static ever since. Hence my argument that an important *raison d'être* of the l'Aube des peuples collection is providing exoticism to a French reading public that has always been fond of that kind of reading. This idea is not a new one; in a 1972 monograph entitled *l'Exotisme d'Homère à Le Clézio*, Roger Mathé argues that one of the major themes of French literature

⁹¹ (MOD) In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros told me that Jean Grosjean's main objection was that his original French translation made McGinty sound like an urban dweller, and that Grosjean found this completely unacceptable.

⁹² (MOD) The word "sauvage" (savage) is obviously not a word that the directors of the l'Aube des peuples collection consider inappropriate as attested by their use of it on the cover promotion of William Dessaint's and Avounado Ngwâma's book, *Au sud des nuages* (*South of the Clouds*), also published in the l'Aube des peuples collection and described as "the eagerly awaited book of those who wish to penetrate into the thinking of the savage" ("le livre tant attendu par ceux qui souhaitent pénétrer dans la pensée du sauvage" (more on this shortly).

has always been and remains providing exoticism for a public which has remained constant in its fondness for the genre⁹³.

PURVEYORS OF EXOTICISM TO THE FRENCH READING PUBLIC

From 1970 to 1974 Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio lived among the Embera and Waunana Indians of Panama. Later, he became a specialist on the history of Michoacan (central Mexico) and defended a thesis on the subject at the Institut d'études mexicaines of Perpignan (France). He subsequently taught at the University of Albuquerque, in New Mexico, where he still lives part of each year. He had published 48 books by the end of 2007, largely novels, the vast majority of which were published by Gallimard (Arguedas, 2008). On October 9, 2008, Sweden's Nobel Academy gave its prestigious award for literature to Jean-Marie Gustave LeClézio as an "author of new departures, poetic adventure and sensual ecstasy, explorer of a humanity *beyond and below the reigning civilization*" (Lea, 2008—my italics).

The plot of a significant number of Le Clézio's novels are driven by the main character's quest for a lost Eden that he or she is vaguely aware of having lost and longs to return to. In *Désert* (Gallimard 1980), Lalla, a stunningly beautiful young Bedouin living in a shanty town on the outskirts of a large seaside Moroccan city is haunted by visions of "blue warriors", who

⁹³ In my view—and as Mathé seems to also imply by including Homer in his list of practitioners of exoticism—this fondness for things exotic is not confined to French readers but a characteristic found in virtually all Western societies. Please note that I am not against exoticism per se; however, I feel duty-bound to mention that I find it to be an important factor in the publication of a particular text within a particular collection, which, moreover, also includes many other works that may be deemed "exotic" in accordance with Webster's College Dictionary's definition of that word as something "foreign or strikingly unusual or strange in effect, appearance or nature".

once lived free and wisely from the “bounties” of the Sahara. Lalla is not conscious of this herself, but the readers are made to understand that the “blue warriors” of her visions are her ancestors. In search of a better life, she crosses the Mediterranean to Marseille, where everyone seeks to exploit her, including a professional photographer who transforms her into a glamorous fashion magazine cover girl. Lalla can’t forget the desert and the “blue warriors” of her vision. Now pregnant, she crosses back to her childhood shanty town and by the final pages, walks out to where the Sahara meets the sea to birth her baby in the shade of an ancient fig tree.

In *Ourania* (Gallimard, 2006), French geographer Daniel Silitoé travels across Mexico by bus towards a mysterious valley that he plans to “survey”, when “the strangest young man [he’s] ever met” (Le Clézio 2006 A, 25) sits next to him. His name is Raphaël Zacharie. He was born in Rivière-du-Loup, Québec, Canada, the son of a Québécoise and an Innu (Montagnais) Aboriginal from the North Shore of the lower St. Lawrence River region. When his mother died, his father, who’d been jailed for an unspecified crime, broke out to collect his son and take him on a southerly trek from Rivière-du-Loup through the United States of America and much of Mexico to Campos, an utopian commune on a fertile farm that’s coveted by a rich landowner who wants to add it to his immense land holdings on which his peasants grow the strawberries that he exports, fresh or as jam, to Canada and the US. Predictably, the rich landowner gets his way; the corrupt local police disperses the commune’s inhabitants, and by the end of the novel, Silitoé can only deplore Campos’ demise, while Raphaël is glimpsed pursuing his quest.

Le Clézio is also a translator. One of his translations, *Les prophéties du Chilam Balam*, begins with a 30-page explanation and description of the sacred texts of the pre-Columbian Maya civilisation that he translated into French and whose text occupies the rest of the book. Le Clézio does not claim authorship of the book, only its translation, which he prefers to call an “adaptation” into French of an earlier English translation of the original 16th century Spanish-language text by Mayan high priests. Le Clézio’s translation is thus a translation of a translation, and since he includes none of his English source text, much less any of the original Spanish, it is impossible to judge the quality of his translation. Nevertheless, it is safe to write that had the *L’Aube des peuples collection* existed in 1976, *Les prophéties du Chilam Balam* would have been a perfect fit among the rest of that collection’s titles.

As previously stated, Le Clézio is also an historian. His *Le rêve mexicain ou la pensée interrompue de l’Amérique indienne* (Gallimard 1988, translated into English by Teresa Lavender Fagan as *The Mexican Dream or the Interrupted Thought of American Civilizations*, University of Chicago Press, 1993) is based on the 16th century memoirs of Bernal Diaz del Castillo, one of Hernán Cortés’ *Conquistadores* in the conquest of Montezuma’s Mexico. Le Clézio tries to give his readers a sense of what has been lost through the destruction of indigenous American civilisations. He argues that if the war technology of the Conquistadors was superior to that of the Incas and Mayas, in virtually all other aspects, these civilisations were far more advanced than that of their European conquerors’, in medicine, astronomy, and, most of all, in a way of life in which humans lived in harmony with the natural world. Le Clézio maintains that the Conquistadors irretrievably

destroyed civilisations that already knew what Westerners so desperately need to relearn; how to survive without destroying their own vital environment.

Roger Mathé argues that Le Clézio is a recent example of a long tradition of purveyors of exoticism going all the way back to Homer (1972). It would be hard to argue against Mathé, certainly concerning most of Le Clézio's novels, and perhaps also concerning *The Mexican Dream*, with its lengthy descriptions of the cities of the Incas and Mayas, and particularly of the Ancient Native Mexicans' ceremonial dress and performances. As one reads them, one can't help but wonder just how historically accurate such lushly expansive descriptions might be so many centuries after the disappearance of these civilisations.

Jean Grosjean has published several books of verse poetry, the latest of which, *La rumeur des cortèges* (Gallimard, 2005), continues his lifelong search for concrete manifestations of a Creator who has chosen to remain invisible and silent since Creation. Grosjean has sought such manifestations in nature (Maxence 2005, 61-2). According to Maxence, in Grosjean's poetry, language takes a backseat to affording his readers a glimpse of the divine through the thoughts of the prophets and the apostles (ibid. 22-3).

In addition to his verse poetry, Grosjean has also published several books of prose poetry, many of which are based on Biblical characters. In these book-length prose poems, characters typically apprehend the divine, not in the blinding light of "burning bushes", but in starlit skies, in trembling blades of grass or in the music of a stream flowing over polished stones. Judging by his poetry, Grosjean's beliefs might be described as Christian pantheism. According to Augustin Guillot, Grosjean has shown little interest

in History—he argued that modern man has replaced Time with History—and a historiography that he likens to the process of cinematic editing where individual scenes and images are pasted together to produce a final cut that owes considerably more to the film-maker's personal views and ideas than to reality. This might seem paradoxical, writes Guillot, for a man who, like Grosjean, has spent so much time and energy selecting and publishing the founding narratives of so many peoples for the *L'Aube des peuples* collection. In fact, he argues, Grosjean is anything if not true to his beliefs in all of his work, for to him, the Bible, like other foundation narratives, far from inventing intellectual systems based on ideas translated into an abstract language, contains humanity's primary wisdom in the language of the only true universal acumen there is, that of each individual human being (Guillot 1999, 206-7). In a 2006 letter to Michel Crépu, Le Clézio states that it was Grosjean who first had the idea for a new collection that would be a sort of "library of origins" ("Bibliothèque des origines"), and who gave it the name *l'Aube des peuples* (Le Clézio, 2006 B).

Like Jean Grosjean, Guillot favours the use of politically correct terms, as evidenced by his phrase "humanity's primary wisdom." For his part, Grosjean prefers the more poetic notion of peoples arrested at the "dawn" or "origin" of humanity, as demonstrated by his "*l'Aube des peuples*" phrasing. Whatever the precise phrasing used though, both of them refer to the same peoples viewed in much the same way. As a long-time Gallimard reader and co-director of its *l'Aube des peuples* collection, Grosjean is also well aware of the French reading public's long-standing taste for exoticism. Tommy McGinty's stories certainly qualify as exotic enough, provided, however, that

his way of speaking be such as to create a true distance between him and French readers.

Grosjean's language requirements must have been a major constraint for Dominique Legros, whose career work has, besides his work on the crow story, consisted in reconstructing the Tutchone's economy, social organisation and history from the time immediately before contact to modern times through a combination of written and traditional oral sources⁹⁴ and to promote the idea of the coevalness of all peoples. Legros' own inclination was to present Tommy McGinty's Tutchone founding narrative in a way that was immediately accessible to his French readers. It was Jean Grosjean's refusal of this that compelled him to come up with an alternative language register that would create distance between his book's narrator and French readers; and it was Pierrette Désy's objections that made him change it once more so as to also create distance for his Québécois readers. With both his first and second choices thus denied him, he was compelled to come up with a third language option, one that differed from any common French language dialect. As to Tommy McGinty's *gros mots*, if neither their Parisian nor their Québécois equivalents were acceptable then why not simply delete them altogether?

Before moving on to the description of the Gallimard publication of the crow story, one final factor must be mentioned at this point because it sheds light upon Dominique Legros' thinking and approach. When I asked him why Tommy McGinty was not credited as co-author on either the English or the French publication's book covers, Legros countered that he does not in any

⁹⁴ See for example his 2007 *Oral History as History: Tutchone Athapaskan in the Period 1840-1920*.

way claim to be the author of the story of crow, but he is the author of the book in the sense that he transposed that story from a hitherto strictly oral to a written version and that he is the author of the book's Forward, Introduction and Afterword. He went on to explain:

I am the author of a photographic snapshot; a moment that I reworked much like a photographer retouches his photographs before exhibiting or selling them. Mister McGinty retells a story created, not by him, but by an endless number of ancestors. He is not the author of that story; he is like a pianist, the interpreter of that story in the same way that a concert pianist is the interpreter of a musical partition (personal communication, March 25, 2008; my translation).

In the course of a recent encounter, I again asked Dr. Legros if he considers himself the sole author of the books in which Tommy McGinty's story of crow is published. "Non," he answered, "je suis l'accoucheur du livre" (No, I am the midwife (or perhaps the obstetrician) of the book). "Qui accouche alors?" (Who then is giving birth?) I then asked. "La société tutchone par McGinty" (Tutchone society through McGinty), he answered. At this point, I asked Dr. Legros why Tommy McGinty is not named as one of the authors of both books. "Tommy McGinty n'est pas auteur; l'histoire qu'il interprète est très ancienne" (Tommy McGinty is not an author; the story that he interprets is a very old one) came Legros' answer.

THE L'AUBE DES PEUPLES COLLECTION

L'Aube des peuples was launched in 1990 with the publication of two titles, *L'Histoire des rois francs* (*The History of Frankish Kings*), translated from the original Latin, and *Pop Wuh* (*Popol Vuh*), translated from the 18th century Spanish, itself a translation of the original Quiché Maya. The

collection's first two publications are typical of most of the collection's titles, 34 in number to date, the latest to appear being *Etoroa*, featuring myths, legends and traditions of a Polynesian island, translated from the Tahitian language by Michel Brun. Of the 34 titles, 4 are translations of myths of Aboriginal peoples of the Americas, one is the translation of an Inuit's memoirs and one is a translation of myths of Aboriginals of Northern Siberia. Only 3 of the collection's titles are attributed to someone other than one or several storytellers; they are *Le dit des Vrais Hommes* (*The Sayings of the Real Men*), described as "myths, tales, legends and traditions of the Cashinahua Indians" retold by André-Marcel d'Ans, to whom exclusive authorship is attributed; *Au sud des nuages* (*South of the Clouds*), described as "myths and tales collected orally from the Lissou mountain people (Tibet and Burma), "the eagerly awaited book of those who wish to penetrate into the thinking of the savage"⁹⁵ ("le livre tant attendu par ceux qui souhaitent pénétrer dans la pensée du sauvage"), here retold by William Dessaint and Avounado Ngwâma, who are attributed joint authorship; and, finally, *L'histoire du corbeau et Monsieur McGinty*, whose cover attributes authorship to Dominique Legros.

Like Legros' *L'histoire du corbeau*, d'Ans' *Le dit des Vrais Hommes* takes the typical form of virtually all of l'Aube des peuples' publications⁹⁶, with the same style of front cover featuring a small colour reproduction of a significant image (in this case a traditional Cashinahua ceremonial mask) at upper centre with the title directly under in large boldface characters, the

⁹⁵ The use of the name « savage » is directly inspired by Lévi-Strauss' teachings; see for example his 1962 *La pensée sauvage* (*The Savage Mind* (1966)).

⁹⁶ See appendix 2

author's name is directly beneath, the *nrf* logo under that, and, at the bottom of the page, the name of the publisher. Inside, after the customary title pages, comes the "Remerciements" page, here consisting of the author's attempt at justifying his claim to the book's sole authorship while acknowledging that the narratives featured are entirely those of the numerous Cashinahua storytellers who collaborated with him over several years, only one of whom he actually names. He allows that to insist on having one's own name appear as that of its author on the title page of a book of other people's stories could seem an act of pure vanity, but he nevertheless feels justified because as an ethnologist and writer he has been able to carry out a project that illiterate Cashinahua storytellers would by no means have had the capacity to undertake themselves, let alone even conceive of its possibility (d'Ans 1991, 7-9). This somewhat unusual "acknowledgement" section is followed by a 42-page "Introduction" that might have more accurately been titled *A brief ethnography of the Cashinahua people of Peru and Brazil*. The rest of the book is dedicated to the actual Cashinahua stories.

The cover page of Dessaint's and Ngwâma's *Au sud des nuages* follows precisely the same pattern as Legros' and d'Ans' books, except that immediately under the authors' names we are told that the book is prefaced by Georges Condominas (a well-known French ethnographer and a founder of the Association Française d'Anthropologie). After the usual title pages, Condominas spends five pages telling potential readers why this is a must read. Then come the acknowledgements—very brief and to the point—the book is dedicated to the memory of the dead Lissou couple whose stories are here presented in translation. The husband and wife are said to have been

Lissou “bards” of high repute. In the following six-page foreword, we learn the precise relationship of the authors to the bards and to the Lissou culture. Avòunado Ngwâma is the bards’ daughter and therefore a Lissou by birth. William Dessaint is Avòunado Ngwâma’s husband; in other words, the bards’ son-in-law and a Lissou by marriage. He also happens to be an ethnographer by profession, and has been studying the Lissou since 1962. After a few brief notes on the transcription and translation of the original Lissou into French comes a 130-page ethnography of the Lissou, whose traditional stories then occupy the rest of this 650-page book. Of the remaining 31 titles in the collection, 14 are “anonyme”, 14 are attributed to their original narrator in a language other than French (all known translators receive full credit on the title page), and the remaining 3 are attributed to “collectives” or multiple authors and/or narrators.

THE BOOK’S COVER

Most conspicuous on the French edition’s front cover ⁹⁷, and immediately above the book’s title, is a 58-millimetre by 46-millimetre coloured postcard drawing of a raven by artist Rudi Hurzlmeir, entitled “Le Corbeau”. Though not created specifically for this book’s cover⁹⁸, this raven nevertheless very aptly represents the spirit of Tommy McGinty’s crow. He is wearing very worn-out cowboy boots and is walking in a barren stubble field with a stylised stub of a barren tree in the background. He’s chewing on a brown stalk of straw (no doubt to appease his perpetual hunger). Dr. Legros

⁹⁷ See Appendix 2 for a scanned reproduction of the book’s front and back covers.

⁹⁸ Dominique Legros, personal communication.

told me that it was his idea to use Rudi Hurzlmeir's *Le corbeau* postcard on the cover. He added that he had wanted a precise translation of the words appearing on the English book cover for the Gallimard edition, but that Gallimard's "typographer" had objected that it was too wordy. This is why the translation of the words "A Tutchone Athapaskan Indian recounts the creation of the world" was relegated to the back cover.

INSIDE THE BOOK

Like his Canadian Museum of Civilisation version, Dominique Legros' French version⁹⁹ of the crow story begins with a short abstract (résumé), followed by 2 pages of acknowledgements (Remerciements). The French *remerciements* require ½ page more than the English version because in addition to faithfully translating the English acknowledgements, it also acknowledges the contributions of Nicolas Cousineau, and Jean Grosjean—who strongly advised Legros to "conserver l'histoire dans sa forme orale et de préserver le style compact du narrateur" (to keep the story in its oral format and to preserve the narrator's compact style) (Legros 2003, 10). A French translation of the Zora Neale Hurston epigraph found in the English edition appears next. This is followed by a 22-page translation of the English foreword (avant propos), which is itself followed by a 14-page translation of the English introduction. Then comes the translation of the actual story of crow, here occupying 159 pages. This, in turn, is followed by a 125-page translation of the English afterword (postface). Then comes the bibliography,

⁹⁹ Gallimard printed a total of 2782 copies of *L'histoire du corbeau et Monsieur McGinty*. The initial print run is not yet sold out (D. Legros, personal communication).

the table of content and, finally, a list of the titles published in Gallimard's *L'aube des peuples* collection.

RECEPTION

I have found but one single review of the French-language Gallimard edition of the story of crow. This is by Montreal literary journalist Caroline Montpetit. It appeared in 2004 in the weekend literary supplement of Montreal's French-language daily *Le Devoir*. Montpetit's comments are largely based on a personal interview with Dominique Legros. What is most striking about the review is that it takes up the entire front page of the newspaper's "Livres" (books) section. The actual text of the review is however much shorter since it only occupies the lower third of the page, while a large stylised flying raven occupies the upper three-quarters of the page in a striking effect that must have surely attracted readers' attention. When I asked representatives of the McGinty family and of the Selkirk First Nation Government what they thought of the Gallimard publication, they appeared surprised. "Dominique never told us he had also published Tommy's stories in French," they said. "We would have probably never known if you [i.e., Philippe Cardinal] hadn't asked us what we think about it."

THE TRANSLATION

Dominique Legros wanted to share his reading of the Northern Tutchone's traditional stories as narrated by Tommy McGinty. He expected

that his book would “be foremost of interest to [his] colleagues in anthropology and, among general readers, to those who are curious about some of the problems which have recently faced anthropologists doing fieldwork and reporting their findings mainly for academic audiences—not so much to serve the needs of the people they have worked with” (1999,15) before suggesting that “A reader not involved in these debates may very well choose to move on directly to the story of crow itself, or to its introduction” (note that the paragraph in which this sentence appears has been almost entirely omitted from the French version published by Gallimard). As he makes clear in the next paragraph, Legros also wants to share his understanding of the Tutchone’s traditional founding narrative with “as large a readership as feasible among First-Nation Canadians as well as among other Canadians, among non-specialists and specialists” (1999, 16). In the French version, Legros reiterates his wish that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians be an important part of his readership, and then goes further than in English in expressing the hope that this story will “move those living elsewhere in the world who read it to reflect upon it and perhaps even to develop a taste for retelling it themselves” (2003, 18—my translation). Further in the same paragraph he points out that “some may rightly argue that, somehow, I [i.e., Legros] interpret the story for I select it for publication. If it is so, and it is, I do so, however, only in as much as I *celebrate* the cultural production of a First Nation and in as much as the activity of appreciating it is already in part interpreting” (1999, 16; 2008, 18—italics in original). As befits the “new” ethnographer that he claims to be, such interpretive bias must be acknowledged right from the outset, which Legros

does. He does not, however, make it equally clear that his selecting is not confined to deciding which story he deems worthy of publication, for not only does he also select who translates the story that he chose but he moreover actively directs and contributes to the Tutchone – English translation process, selects, reorders, recombines and sometimes re-interprets and even creates the passages that will go into the making of his published English version of the various episodes; and finally, he even translates this English version into French himself.

We already saw in the previous chapter that unlike translators of others' texts, authors who translate their own do not feel bound to remain "faithful" to their source text and therefore their translations may often be more properly termed revised versions of their original texts rather than translations properly speaking. Michaël Oustinoff argues that if the text translated by its own author is "original", then its translation, also produced by the author, should be considered a second "original" (2001, 12). He further argues that as his own translator, the author has "all the rights" (*tous les droits*) because the norms that usually guide the work of translators who translate others' texts do not apply to him because self-translated texts are subject to the same logic that applies to literary works "whose authors, over time, produce several versions" (*ibid.* 13). Oustinoff further contends that when an author is translating into his own native language a text that he originally wrote in another language, his translation is almost always *naturalisante*—in other words such a translation "domesticates" or "naturalises" what was originally a "foreign" text into a native-born text (*ibid.* 24, 29, 31). Oustinoff goes further yet when he asks, "When the target

language also happens to be the [self-translating] author's native language, is the translation not actually *superior* to the original" (2001, 107—his italics—my translation)? If Oustinoff is correct and given that Legros sincerely believes himself to be the sole author of the book's Foreword, Introduction and Afterword, we would expect that in his French translation of those sections of the book he would have felt free to "correct" and expand upon any passage of the original that he may have deemed less than adequate in retrospect, and we would expect to find evidence of this in the translated text. We already know, moreover, that in his textualization of McGinty's self-translation into English, Legros did not hesitate to "correct" and expand upon any passage of McGinty's text that he deemed inadequate. In other words, in his English textualization, Dr. Legros behaved in a manner very similar to what Oustinoff suggests to be the norms practiced by self-translating authors. This suggests that translation and textualization norms differ little whether one is a self-translating author or one is an "accoucheur", as Dr. Legros describes himself in relation to the publications of Tommy McGinty's story of crow. If this is so, then there must be evidence of this in the French translation. I will therefore be looking for such evidence in my analysis of Dr. Legros' French translation.

But before examining Dr. Legros' French translation for such evidence, let us briefly consider his original French translation, which, according to him, rendered the Tutchone-inflected low-register Yukon-River-Sternwheeler-style English-Canadian text produced in collaboration with Tommy McGinty into an existing French register that he considered roughly equivalent, i.e., a very low register, popular French of the type that is spoken by people at the lower end

of the social scale. From my translation scholar's point of view, this does not seem an unreasonable strategy. This is why, as I mentioned earlier, my colleagues and I routinely advise our translation students to translate any utterance in the source language into its closest natural equivalent in the target language. Recall moreover that Michaël Oustinoff tells us that authors who self translate a text that they had originally written in a foreign language into their own language almost always domesticate their target text, and further recall that Legros' own textualizing norms, as already stated, are very similar to what Oustinoff suggests are those of self-translating authors. At this point a non-translation-specialist might suggest that between the equivalency norm advocated by university translation instructors and domesticating one's self-translation, the difference is somewhat tenuous. And he would be correct, except that when translation teachers advise their students to, in essence, domesticate their target texts, they are training their students to translate non-literary or pragmatic texts. Translation scholars tend to theorise literary translation very differently than they theorise so-called pragmatic translation. Few translation theorists have any quarrel with domesticating a translation of a pragmatic text, but when it comes to literary translation—and the story of *crow* is a literary text—there is no consensus among theorists. As Eugene Nida points out,

Semioticians such as Jakobson, Eco and Sebeok regard any text as part of a communication process. And accordingly, all translating or interpreting must involve some relevant relation between the text in the source language and the text in the receptor language. At the same time, it should be clear that although this relation is never exact, there should be sufficient similarity that it can be described as having some significant measure of equivalence, described either as "the closest natural equivalent," or "as sufficiently similar

that no reader of a translated text is likely to misunderstand the corresponding meaning of the source text" (Nida, 2001, 5-6).

Others, such as Henri Meschonnic (1985), contend that a literary translation with domesticating tendencies is unethical since it hides the "foreignness" of the translated text from its readers. Still others, like Antoine Berman, agree that a translation with domesticating tendencies is unethical and ethnocentric (1999, 29), unless the translator clearly indicates which passages he chooses to domesticate and why (1995, 92-3). Yet others, such as Lawrence Venuti, deplore the "invisibility of the translator". He explains:

This somewhat melodramatic term refers to two related phenomena, one having to do with reader response to translations, the other with the criterion by which they are produced and evaluated. On the one hand, readers usually respond to the translation of a foreign text, whether prose or poetry, as if the text had been originally written in their language, as if it were not in fact a translation; on the other hand, a translation is judged acceptable (by editors, reviewers and readers) when it reads fluently, when the absence of any awkward phrasings, unidiomatic constructions or confused meanings gives the appearance that the translation reflects the foreign author's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the original text. What is so remarkable here is that both attitudes completely efface the translator's crucial intervention in the text: the more "successful" the translation, the more invisible the translator, and the more visible the author or meaning of the original text (1986, 179).

According to Venuti, there are two main factors behind the need for the invisibility of the translator of literary texts. First, readers want to believe that the translated work that they are reading provides them with transparent access to "authorial psychology or meaning" (ibid. 188). The second is of a socioeconomic nature:

If we take the contemporary call for fluency or easy readability as our example, it soon becomes clear that this translation strategy has a certain relation to bourgeois economic values: the less awkward, unidiomatic and ambiguous a

translation is made, the more readable it is, and hence the more “consumable” it becomes as a commodity on the book market. Consumability is the ideology which mediates between the production of a fluent translation and its commodification; it is inscribed in the materiality of the text and situates that text in the existing relations of production. The ideology of consumability can be considered an external determinant of the translation: it is imposed by editors and publishers partly in response to sales figures, a point which means that it connects the text to another, relatively autonomous social practice—specifically the business of publishing, generally economic practice in capitalist social formations (ibid. 187).

In 1986, Venuti advocated the development of strategies specifically designed to counter “bourgeois” longings for direct “transparent” access to the author and the capitalist commodification practices in the publication of translated works:

This can be done, in the present situation, only by developing a strategy that foregrounds the materiality of the text as a translation, as something that cannot be confused with either the source-language text or a text written originally in the target language. The translation must be seen as a *tertium datum*, which “sounds foreign” to the reader but has an opaque quality that prevents it from seeming a transparent window on the author or original text: it is that opacity—a use of language that resists easy reading according to contemporary standards—that will make visible the intervention of the translator, his confrontation with the alien nature of a foreign text. This sort of translation, quite simply, will read as if it had been translated (ibid. 190).

Some dozen years later, however, Venuti adopted a more “middle of the road” attitude when he allowed that “[a] translation project can deviate from domestic norms to signal the foreignness of the foreign text and create a readership that is more open to linguistic and cultural differences—yet without resorting to experiments that are so estranging as to be self-defeating” (1998, 87).

Venuti’s lamenting the “translator’s invisibility” is a common complaint among translators. Translating ethnographers, however, may well be seeking the opposite. As translators of words, they often make use of various devices

to make their work as non-visible as possible. It is only as translators of culture that they make themselves as visible as they possibly can. This, as I will show, is true of Dominique Legros' crow story publications. Kate Sturge reports the same phenomenon in ethnographer Elizabeth Burgos-Debray's publication of Rigoberta Menchú's life's story narrative (2007, 98-9) and in ethnographer Marjorie Shostak's publication of Nisa's life's story narrative (ibid. 95). In the Legros/McGinty collaboration, Legros has McGinty tell the story of crow in Tutchone on tape. But since Legros is not competent to translate this himself, he has McGinty self-translate. Like the Boasians, Legros is only partly interested in the story as a story or as oral literature; he is just as, if not more interested in it as a source of data about Northern Tutchone traditional culture and world views. But unlike the early Boasians, Legros is not a linguistic anthropologist. He cannot (and neither does he try to) learn anything new about the Northern Tutchone language as such, or to describe it as a language. And neither does he mention any of the difficulties McGinty encountered and how he solved them during the translation process. No, Legros' contribution to the Tutchone – English translation was a systematic series of interventions designed specifically to elicit as much information of an ethnographic nature as possible from the translator, information that he then wove seamlessly (invisibly, as Venuti would say) into his final target text.

When he translated into French, he again strove for invisibility. What I have been able to discover about the translation problems he encountered and how he solved them, I have discovered by interviewing him, among other things, about the translation process. Other than the terse "*traduit et adapté*

de l'anglais (Canada) par l'auteur" on the front cover of the Gallimard edition, and the two short paragraphs in the Remerciements section, one thanking Nicholas Cousineau for his help and the other thanking Jean Grosjean for his advice, there is no further discussion of the translation process. Nothing is done to draw attention to the translator or to the fact of this being a translation. When Legros leaves occasional Tutchone words untranslated, in virtually every case he adds an explanation that amounts to an elaborate translation in the guise of a spontaneous explanation by McGinty—either prompted by Legros or added by Legros and taken from previous unrelated conversations or even made up by Legros in a style that so closely imitates the Tutchone elder's own as to be indistinguishable from the real thing, such as making McGinty say "White man way you call him...". So as to preserve an aura of authenticity for the stories being told, Legros deemed it important to avoid "altogether any footnotes," because "This would inevitably have made the story look like a subject of study and not, as I wanted, a narration in itself and for itself" (Legros 1999, 219). The goal is to make both the translator and the ethnographer invisible in both the published English and the French translations of the actual narration of the story of crow. This is why the narration portion is made to appear as a straightforward, interference-free, narration by the Tutchone elder. And this is why the ethnographer's analysis and explanations regarding the real meaning of the story of crow are reserved for the foreword, preface and afterword. Making the work of the translator and ethnographer clearly visible would have had the unwanted effect of making the constructed nature of the published narrative all too visible, thus undermining the ethnographer's carefully

established ethnographic authority as well as casting doubts on the genuineness of the story as an authentic “all Aboriginal” story instead of the hybrid construct that it in fact is.

This has implications for translation scholars, who might well be moved to ponder upon just how much visibility translators really want to have. If by “visibility” translators mean leaving an occasional word untranslated (though often, like Legros, weaving in some form of *de facto* translation disguised to look as if it had been thus in the source text), then I argue that they are easily satisfied, for in reality, this does virtually nothing to make the translator more visible. An explanation in the form of a translator’s note inserted in parentheses or in a footnote would be far more effective; but then virtually no one would want to publish a translated novel with parenthetical or foot-noted explanations inserted more than once or twice in the entire book. Chances are that few people would want to read such a novel. And, as Venuti seems to have come to understand, few readers are ready to read texts that read too much “as if [they] had been translated”. To be fully visible, translators would have to clearly state what each of their translation choices were, and justify them. No one but publishers specialising in translation studies would even consider publishing such a translation. And few translators would even think of suggesting that translators of literary texts be made that visible. Clearly, literary and (even more so) “pragmatic” translators are little more interested in being “visible” than ethnographic translators are much beyond being more prominently credited with having translated any given work being published, coupled with a somewhat more knowledgeable acknowledgement of the quality of their translation work by literary critics.

As we already saw, domestication was the very last thing that Grosjean, Le Clézio and Gallimard wanted—as publishers, they were well aware of their readers' taste for the exotic. And even though to Gallimard's "bourgeois" readers (to use Venuti's term) the French lower classes may indeed appear "exotic" in some ways, that is not the kind of exoticism that they expect to find in a *l'Aube des peuples* publication. We also saw that after his abortive attempt to switch to low register Québécois idiom, Legros says he gave up on rendering the precise register of his English original into French. He did not however give up on domesticating his translation, quite the contrary, he only opted to "give up on adapting into French, certain asyntactic original sentences that reproduced the English spoken by Mr. McGinty—asyntactic forms of English that were in fact calques of Tutchone stylistics"¹⁰⁰ (Legros 2003, 10).

According to Dominique Legros, Jean Grosjean and *l'Aube des peuples* had to give up on obtaining the kind of language that would have created a real distance between the narrator and his readers. That isn't to say that such a distance would no longer exist, for it would, except that it would be created by *what* the narrator says—not by *how* he says it or what language register he says it in—but by his worldview, a worldview that's so utterly different from that of the average French reader that Grosjean and Le Clézio must have realised that as long as the French used in the translation remained reasonably neutral, the situations, characters and plot of the

¹⁰⁰ Note that if these "asyntactic forms of English that were in fact calques of Tutchone stylistics" had been "adapted into French", this would have had the unwanted effect of drawing attention to the fact of this being a translation.

narrative are so foreign to its expected readers that their taste for the exotic would be amply satisfied.

THE FRENCH TRANSLATION, A BRIEF ANALYSIS

First, a note on “bad words” or “gros mots”; different people would no doubt define the expression differently, for it is a subjective concept. I, for example, find none of the words used by Tommy McGinty and Dominique Legros in any of the textualizations of the story of crow offensive in any way. In my view, all of the language used throughout is appropriate and well suited to the context in which it is used. As I found out in Pelly Crossing, however, many contemporary Northern Tutchone do not share my view on the matter. Judging by his insistence in his introductions, moreover (see 1999, 37-8, & 2003, 49-50), Dominique Legros feared that non-Aboriginal readers would react negatively to the sexually explicit words and situations in both his books. He suggests that Western culture “does not let [Westerners] approach the domain of sexuality in the same matter-of-fact manner as the Athapaskan” (1999, 38). Lucy and Mary McGinty’s definition of “bad words”, as far as I was able to discover, is largely confined to sexually explicit words, phrases and narration any and all of which they consider inappropriate. Mrs. Hall, who practices a syncretic blend of traditional spirituality and devout Christianity, would agree with that definition except that she would add that any casual use of the name of the Christian deity also comes under the heading of “bad words”. Mrs. Hall appears to be unaware that words such as “gosh”, “gee” and “jeez” are euphemisms for the more explicit “God” and “Jesus”. Tommy

McGinty, who used all of the above and similar words abundantly, may also have been unaware of such words' true meaning. Dominique Legros, on the other hand, as his French translation demonstrates, is well aware of them. Given that the use of "gros mots" would be a non-issue had it not been so vehemently raised by Tommy McGinty's daughters and niece (as well as several SFN officials), it is with their definition in mind that I picked the words to be analysed even though I am well aware that most of the words so selected would not be considered offensive by most French and Québécois people¹⁰¹ in the way that they are by many contemporary Selkirk First Nation people.

GROS MOTS

Dr. Legros recently told me that in the French version he removed all but six of Tommy McGinty's use of coarse words and that he only left such words where they occur in dialogues either in crow's mouth or in another character's. Nevertheless, these are also instances to which the McGinty family and the SFN objected and it can be said that there are indeed *gros mots* left in the French translation, while keeping in mind that "gros mots" or coarse language is a highly subjective concept in that a word that may be considered "grossier" or coarse by a given person or a given culture, may well be considered "familiar language" by another person or another culture,

The offensive potential of these "bad" words (to the McGinty family and the SFN) is sometimes more pronounced in French when retranslated

¹⁰¹ And indeed by the great majority of my English speaking Euro-Canadian friends and acquaintances.

into English (though generally not in Franco-French per se), than it was in the original English. In the episode entitled “An osprey does not want to share water” (“Un grand aigle pêcheur refuse de partager son eau” in French), for example, begins thus: “But after that: ‘Darn, no water!’” (Legros 1999, 51). The French translation reads: « Mais après ça : ‘Nom de Dieu ! Plus d’eau ! Tout est recouvert !’ » (Legros 2003, 64). The mild English expletive “darn” is generally used to avoid the (relatively) mildly blasphemous “damn” or “damned”. The Québécois French equivalent would be “mosus”, a euphemism for the harsher “maudit”. In contemporary Franco-Français, *merde* would be a close equivalent expletive. Instead, Legros opted for the formerly mildly blasphemous “Nom de Dieu” (which is now considered quaint in France), and which happens to be very specifically Franco-Français—in spite of any need to create distance between the narrator and his French readers. Note that in this passage the translator practiced *étoffement* or expansion when he added “grand” to qualify “aigle pêcheur” in the title, additional information that appears neither in the 1999 published English text, nor in the transcription of Tommy McGinty’s own self translation. Note also the further expansion resulting from adding “tout est recouvert!”, a piece of information that has no equivalent in the English source text either.

In the episode entitled “The world is flooded, but crow saves his life”, the second last paragraph reads: “‘It must be I made a mistake,’ he says. ‘I came out of that duck’s skin! What for I left it behind? How am I going to swim now? I don’t know at all how to do that on my own. Damn it!’” (1999, 45). In French translation this becomes: « J’ai dû faire une bourde quelque part !

Voyons... J'ai enlevé mon habit de canard ! Mais oui, c'est ça, tiens¹⁰² ! Pourquoi je l'ai laissé là-bas ? Je ne sais pas nager tout seul, moi. Hé, bon Dieu ! » (2003, 58). Although this "bon Dieu !" does indeed have an equivalent "damn it!" in the source text, it is nevertheless surprising to find it in a French translation previously said to be free of "gros mots". Here is another passage from the French translation of the "An osprey does not want to share water" episode: « Et le corbeau s'envole au-dessus de la forêt. De là-haut, il cherche un autre point d'eau où il pourrait boire, mais il ne trouve rien... 'Dieux de dieux !... je meurs de soif, moi. Il faut que je me pose quelque part.' » (2003, 66). This is Legros' translation of "And crow flies out over the bush. He looks around from the air. He looks for some water to drink but sees nothing. 'Gee, I'm dry,' he says. 'Let's land some place'" (1999, 53). "Dieux de dieux" is a major over-translation of the original "gee", which is among the mildest possible of all English expletives, a French equivalent of which would be "eh bien!" or "mince alors!", but definitely not "Dieux de dieux!" And furthermore the French "je meurs de soif, moi" is also a considerable expansion over the mild English "I'm dry".

A few paragraphs further on the English text reads: "But this time the *t'ots'ya*' soldiers make a hell of a racket and scare the shit out of him" (1999, 55). The French translation reads: « Mais maintenant les soldats-t'ots'ya font un barouf d'enfer... Le tuundye en chie dans sa culotte » (2003, 70). Difficult of course to find fault with this basically accurate translation, except that the French translation had been declared free of coarse words. Most recognised

¹⁰² Note that the addition of "Voyons..." and "Mais oui, c'est ça, tiens !", neither of which has an equivalent in the source text, for added dramatic effect. Note that such additions of bits of a character's inner dialogue are a commonly used storytelling technique.

authorities on the French language consider “chier” a vulgar, coarse word that’s best avoided in polite company and anything but the coarsest of coarse writing; *Le Grand Robert*, for example, deems it “familier et vulgaire”¹⁰³. In the very next paragraph, one sentence reads: “All you can see is his ass sticking out up in the air” (1999, 56). The French translation reads: « On ne voit plus que son cul noir qui pointe en l’air » (2003, 71). As with the previous example, a fairly accurate translation, but again, hardly the removal of the *gros mots* which, moreover, are expanded in translation by adding the adjective “noir”, not present in the original. A few pages on, in the “Crow throws his old blanket away” episode, we find the following passage: “I should not have thrown that away,’ he says. ‘I’m just a tight asshole. *Tthaw’ tthole etije.*’ That’s a real Indian swear word that one” (1999, 62). The French translation reads: « ‘Je n’aurais jamais dû jeter cette vieille couverture ! Je ne suis qu’un trou du cul coincé. Un *tthaw’ tthole etije.*’ Ça, c’est un vrai gros mot d’Indien ! » (2003, 79). As we can see, far from removing all of the *gros mots* from his French translation, Legros kept equivalents of many of those that were in the original English text. I could go on, such examples abound throughout the French text, but there would be little point in piling up further examples of essentially the same observation. But before moving on to the next section, I want to provide examples of how Legros handled the translation of the more risqué passages, especially those that deal with the sexuality that so offended the McGinty family.

¹⁰³ Note that whenever there was the slightest doubt in my mind, I verified recognised Franco-French usage and register of words and expressions in *Le Grand Robert de la langue française version électronique*, which I accessed electronically through the library of the University of Alberta’s online resources for students, staff and instructors. *Le Grand Robert* is widely considered among the most reliable of authorities on the French language.

The original published English version of the "Crow marries a good woman" (or Fog Woman) episode begins thus:

So for now crow is just walking hungry. He is going along a river. He walks, he walks, and pretty soon he finds some woman living alone in a camp. There's lots of dried fish hanging on her racks. And this woman is really nice looking: you know, nice tits, sticking out... And nice fat legs too. Crow sees all that.

"Oh gosh," he thinks. "Jeez..."

He comes into the woman's camp. He sits down some way from her.

"Gee," he says. "You got real nice legs and nice tits. And you made lots of dried fish too. My God, where're you coming from, anyway?" (1999, 69).

The French translation reads as follows:

Le corbeau est plus que jamais affamé. Il chemine le long d'une rivière. Il marche, il marche... Soudain, au détour d'un méandre, il aperçoit une femme.

Elle habite seule dans un campement isolé. Des tas de saumons pendent déjà à son séchoir à poissons. Et cette femme est vraiment mignonne. Vous savez, de beaux nichons [the Franco-Français equivalent of the English "tits"], de bonnes grosses cuisses aussi... Le corbeau voit tout ça. Il pense :

« Oh ! Oh ! Oh ! Mon Dieu ! »

Il entre dans le campement et s'assied à quelques pas de la femme. Il dit :

« Bon sang ! tu as vraiment de belles jambes, toi, et de beaux nichons aussi, hein ! Et tu as aussi déjà séché tout un tas de poissons. Et d'abord, d'où tu viens ? (2003, 85).

As in the previous examples, far from removing or even downplaying the sexually charged words in his French translation, Dr. Legros translated them word for word. Then, a few short paragraphs further down, in English the narrator says that, "He raises his two hands and grabs one of her thighs. 'Please, you got such nice soft legs! How about me staying with you?'" (1999, 69). Legros translates: « Il saisit à deux mains l'une des cuisses de la femme et l'embrasse très fort... 'Ah, tes cuisses sont douces et jolies ! Qu'est-ce que tu dirais si je m'installais avec toi ? S'il te plaît !... » (2003, 86). Once again, not only does the translator transpose all the sexually explicit action into French, but he actually expands upon the original English text by adding that he kisses her thigh "très fort". At the risk of belabouring the point, I'll add the

following taken from a few lines further in the same episode: "He sucks her tits and everything and they make real good love" (1999, 70), which in French translation becomes, « Il lui suce les tétons, la caresse de tous bords, et là ils font l'amour pour de bon » (2003, 87). Again, Legros' translation expands upon McGinty's "everything", which becomes "la carresse de tous bords" in his translation.

Before moving on to the next section, here is a final, all important passage taken from the "Crow makes the first women" episode because it is one of the passages that Mrs. Lizzie Hall was so loathe to translate and is therefore highly relevant to my analysis of the McGinty family's grievances against Dominique Legros in Appendix 4. In English it reads:

Whiteman way, *druu* means cunt. But *druu* doesn't sound bad in Indian language. I don't know why cunt looks dirty in English. It's a surprise to me! Maybe the Whiteman has no respect for the woman's own. This may be why! But there are lots of other words like that too. They sound cute and funny in Indian; and, Whiteman way, they all have mud on their face. So I don't know... (1999, 144).

And in Legros' French translation:

Chez les Blancs, « *druu* » ça veut dire « chatte », « con » ou « connasse ». Mais chez nous « *druu* » n'est pas du tout un gros mot. Et je ne comprends pas pourquoi « con » est un mot dégoûtant chez les Blancs. Moi, ça m'étonne toujours ! Mais peut-être que les Blancs n'ont pas de respect pour le propre de la femme. C'est peut-être pour ça ! Et les Blancs ont des tas d'autres mots comme ça. En indien ils sont jolis et mignons, mais chez eux ils ont le visage couvert de boue. Donc je ne sais pas... (2003, 170).

Once again, Legros expands in translation. The English "cunt" becomes, not just "con", but also "chatte" and "connasse".

JUXTAPOSING JOUAL¹⁰⁴ AND LANGUE POPULAIRE FRANCO-FRANÇAISE¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ In accordance with widely accepted usage I use the word "joual" to designate low register, popular Franco-Québécois speech. *Le Grand Robert* defines "joual" thus: "Mot utilisé au

We now know that far from being deleted in translation, a number of Tommy McGinty's *gros mots* have either been transferred into French by replacing them with their closest "natural" equivalent in the target language or by a more vivid, coarser, stronger, and therefore non-equivalent word or expression in the target language, and that they are often expanded upon as well. I now turn my attention to Dominique Legros' statement that when Jean Grosjean objected strongly to his use of low register Franco-French (or *langue populaire franco-française*) to render the Tutchone storyteller's own particular brand of English-Canadian, he replaced it with low register Québécois French (or *joual*), which proved acceptable to Grosjean, but not to Legros' colleague Pierrette Désy, and in the end, (so he told me) he opted not to use either. The question is, just what sort of French did he use then? It is obviously a kind of French that *l'Aube des peuples*' co-director found acceptable; else the book would not have been published. We therefore have to assume that it is the sort of French that creates distance between the book's narrator and French readers since that was Grosjean's main criterion. What sort of French did Legros use then? What are its main characteristics?

In the "osprey does not want to share water" episode, crow reasons, "When he hears an army is coming, he's going to get scared and run away"

Québec pour désigner globalement les écarts (phonétiques, lexicaux, syntaxiques; anglicismes) du français populaire canadien (dont la phonétique est assez éloignée de celle du français canadien des classes cultivées et dont le lexique est fortement anglicisé), soit pour les stigmatiser soit pour en faire un symbole d'identité. → Franco-canadien, québécois. » My Québec French dictionary, *Multidictionnaire de la langue française* (by University of Montreal linguist Marie-Éva de Villers defines "joual" as simply, "Parler populaire du Québec".

¹⁰⁵ I had originally used the widespread word "argot" in lieu of this decidedly less colourful phrase but although *Le Grand Robert* recognises this as a common usage of the word "argot", it points out that this is abusive from a linguistic point of view because "argot" is more properly a form of jargon spoken by French ruffians.

(1999, 52). Legros translates this: « Quand il entend le bruit d'une armée en marche, il a la pétoche et il se sauve à toutes jambes » (2003, 66). In the "Crow meets with the otters" episode, Tommy McGinty comments, "And it's just as well that crow found out about what scares them" (1999, 87). The French translation reads: « En tout cas, c'est bien que le corbeau ait deviné ce qui leur fiche la pétoche » (2003, 106). *Pétoche* is a typical Franco-Français low register word that's synonymous with *peur* or fear. *Pétoche* is never used in French Canada, except very occasionally, and then only by French expatriates, who soon give up using it to communicate with their Québécois neighbours since the latter have no idea what the word means. *Pétoche* is just the kind of word that must have sent alarm bells ringing loudly in Jean Grosjean's mind—such a typical langue populaire franco-française word in the mouth of a Yukon Aboriginal elder would not do at all!

And yet these low register French words and expressions abound throughout the Gallimard edition.

In the "Crow steals the sun from the lake trout" episode the narrator says, "She knows her boss is going to bawl the shit, the hell out of her" (1999, 94). The French translation reads: « Elle sait que son patron va se mettre en boule, la faire chier jusqu'au trognon » (2003, 115). *Se mettre en boule*, meaning "to become angry", is also a typically French low register expression that's never used in Québec. Note that it has no equivalent in the English source text and is therefore yet another example of expansion in the sense that a detail that was not explicitly stated in the source text is explicitly stated in the translation. *Jusqu'au trognon* is another typically French low register expression that's virtually never used in Canada. Its English equivalent might

be “to the hilt” or, in a higher register, “to the utmost”. A Québécois equivalent would be “la faire chier jusqu’au bout”. Note that *faire chier* is universally understood in the French-speaking world to mean “to bawl out” or “to deliberately make life difficult for somebody”.

In the “First matches” episode the narrator says “He looks real funny” (1999, 107). The French version is this: « Elles ont vraiment de drôles de bobines rigolotes » (2003, 130). Note that the change in gender is necessitated by the fact that the “boreal owl”, the bird to which McGinty is referring, is *la chouette boréale* in French, and *chouette* is feminine. The use of the word *bobine* to mean “face” is however typically French. A Québécois equivalent might be *bine*, *binette* or *bouille*. The adjective *rigolote*, meaning “funny”, is also typically French. *Comique* would be its equivalent in French Canada.

In the “Moose, caribou, sheep and goat” episode Tommy McGinty tells the anthropologist, “Give me a minute. I want some tea. I’m getting dry” (1999, 157). In French translation the same passage reads: « D’ailleurs moi, je vais prendre du thé. J’ai la dalle qui s’assèche... » (2003, 187). *Avoir la dalle qui s’assèche* is another typically langue populaire franco-française, exclusively French expression for having a dry throat. A French Canada equivalent would be « avoir le gosier sec ».

In the “Cannibal horsefly-man” episode crow says to the assembled villagers, “That’s *tr’o*, the horsefly. It’s the kind of people that’s eating you—the kind that ate your friends” (1999, 140). Legros translates: « C’est le *tr’o*, leur dit le corbeau, le taon ! C’est ce genre de gars qui vous mange. C’est cette sorte-là qui a bouloité vos amis » (2003, 164). It is doubtful that more

than a small handful of people in Canada would know that in French langue populaire franco-française *boulotter* means “to wolf down”.

But if typical low register French words and expressions abound throughout the translation, that does not mean that there are no typical low register Québécois expressions.

The use of *menterie* (2003, 105) to translate the English “bullshit” (1999, 86) is one example of using a typical Québécois word that was once regularly used in France as well, though it is now somewhat archaic and no longer in general use as it still is in French Canada. Similarly, the sentence “This sun here gave me the hardest time I ever had” (1999, 100) is translated: « Ce soleil-là, il m’en a donné de la misère, la pire que j’aie jamais eue » (2003, 122). The expression “donner de la misère », though universally understood in Québec to mean “having a difficult time accomplishing a task” would be considered a *barbarisme* in France¹⁰⁶, where *misère* now only retains its modern sense of “poverty” or “destitution” (a sense that it also has in Québec besides the meaning already mentioned).

Sometimes, as in this example taken from the “Cannibal horsefly-man” episode the standard French word and its Québécois equivalent appear side by side in the same sentence. In English, the sentence reads, “Whiteman way you call him horsefly” (1999, 136). This is translated as « Les Blancs l’appellent le ‘taon’ ou la ‘mouche à chevreuil’ » (2003, 159). Most French readers would be familiar with the *taon*, but would have never heard of what Legros presents as its alternative, *la mouche à chevreuil*. In Canada, the

¹⁰⁶ *Le Grand Robert* does not even mention this typically Québécois meaning of the word “misère”. It is however possible that this is still understood in certain regions of France where current standard Franco-Français can sometimes take a back seat to a variety of non-standard local usages that are sometimes closely related to typical Québécois usage..

opposite is true. French speaking Canadians would readily recognise la *mouche à chevreuil*, though most Québécois would not recognise it as a “horsefly” but as the horsefly’s smaller (and just as pesky) cousin, known to English Canadians as the “deer fly”. In Québec and in French Canada, a horsefly is either a *taon à cheval* or a *mouche à orignal*, while a *taon* is French Canada’s popular register equivalent to English Canadians’ “bumblebee”.

Faced with the impossible task of pleasing both his French editor and his Québec colleague—one insisting that he refrain from using Franco-Français words and expressions familiar to French readers, the other adamant that Québécois equivalents would alienate Québécois readers—Legros hit upon the clever idea of using them both. It was a clever and undoubtedly elegant way of solving a thorny problem. While some French readers might temporarily have difficulty accepting a Yukon Aboriginal elder’s speaking typical *langue populaire franco-française*, before they have half a chance to decide whether or not this is appropriate, they find themselves reading a sentence featuring vaguely familiar, though difficult to understand typical low register Québécois speech that feels as if it might have been lifted out of a Rabelais novel. Jean Grosjean, who wanted a translation that created distance between the narrator and the French reader, is well served. Similarly, the abundance of Franco-Français low register words and expressions, many of which are difficult to understand for Québécois readers, can’t but create a real distance between Québécois readers and the old Tutchone storyteller. This juxtaposition of *joual* and *langue populaire franco-française* is all the more elegant a solution to a knotty translation problem

that it is difficult to imagine a more appropriate way of rendering Tommy McGinty's Tutchone inflected "Yukon River Sternwheeler English" into French.

NICOLAS COUSINEAU'S CONTRIBUTION AND AN EXAMPLE OF SOME OF LEGROS' BEST TRANSLATIONS

Legros states that cellist Nicolas Cousineau "helped [him] put vibrations and rhythm in the French version" (2003, 10—my translation). According to him, he and Cousineau "undressed" the French language "all the better to re-clothe it in everyday garb" (ibid.). It is virtually impossible to detect the "vibrations and rhythm" that Cousineau might be responsible for with any degree of certainty. However, Dr. Legros recently explained¹⁰⁷ that Cousineau only came in once the translation was already completed. His contribution consisted in reading the text aloud while Dr. Legros listened to how it sounded. Sometimes Dr. Legros would do the reading aloud while Cousineau listened. When either of their voices stumbled, they assumed there was a problem in the flow of the written text. They also worked on the rhythm by cutting a repetition here, adding a pronoun there or elsewhere cutting an expansion that really added nothing. Finally, they tried to come up with innovative Québécois swear words, none of which turned out to be useful in the end.

As a first time literary translator, Dr. Legros shows much potential. Here is an example of some of his best work. This is how his original English source sentence reads: "And in the early days, way back, crow could turn

¹⁰⁷ Personal communication

into man and back into bird and fly around—either way, back and forth” (1999, 43). The translation reads as follows: « À cette époque, voilà bien longtemps, il pouvait se changer en homme puis redevenir un oiseau et s’envoler — tour à tour et aller-retour » (2003, 55). *À cette époque* is not the same as “in the early days”, a literal translation of which would have been something such as “dans les jours premiers” or, more literarily, *aux jours anciens*. *Voilà bien longtemps* is however quite literal a translation of “way back”, and so would *il pouvait se changer en homme puis redevenir un oiseau et s’envoler* be a literal translation of “crow could turn into man and back into bird and fly around”, except that the double use of the reflexive pronoun *se* in effect doubles the agency of the subject *il*—not only does he have the power to do this, but in addition, that it is a power that he gives himself, is the message conveyed by the French sentence, while the message of the English original is merely that crow has that power. On the other hand, replacing the name “crow” with the pronoun *il* has the opposite effect of weakening the feeling of orality that is definitely more present in the original English, in no small part because of the repetition, a recurring feature of orality, as well as weakening the power of the opening paragraph since by actually naming the main character of the story he is about to tell in each of the very first two sentences, the narrator establishes this doubly in his listeners’ imagination. There is moreover a slight loss when “and fly around” is rendered by *et s’envoler* since “around” disappears in translation. Finally, the sentence’s conclusion, *tour à tour et aller-retour* is a minor stroke of genius because of its rhythmic quality; unfortunately, the first part, *tour à tour* is not a true translation of “either way” because *tour à tour* informs the reader that he is first a man,

then a bird, each in turn and for equal periods of time, while the original English only tells readers that he can be either, without suggesting how much time he spends in either state. Nevertheless, the final French phrase is so much more powerful than the original English that few translators could have resisted using it. Not only does it rhyme, but it also features a strong alliteration of the “R” sound, and the triple occurrence of “tour” in less than half the length of a single line makes it just as strong visually as it is orally—Tommy McGinty, who also liked to play with words and their sounds, would no doubt have greatly appreciated this.

Even better, precisely the same formulation is repeated at the end of the very next paragraph: “You call him God or crow, either way, back and forth” (1999, 43). This is translated as: « Ils doivent l’appeler le corbeau ou Dieu — tour à tour et aller-retour » (2003, 55). Reader’s attention is automatically drawn to the *tour à tour et aller-retour* formulation repeated here at the end of the second paragraph in echo of its first appearance at the end of the first. This is very strong poetically for all the reasons already listed in the comments regarding the second sentence, with the additional one that its repetition at the end of two successive paragraphs imparts an incantatory quality to these opening paragraphs—something that most appropriately opens the sacred text that this actually is. And this is not reserved exclusively for the first two paragraphs. It recurs at least once when Tommy McGinty’s original “either way, back and forth” (1999, 141) is rendered in French by « l’un, l’autre ou l’autre encore, et aller-retour » (2003, 166).

EFFECTS OF SELF-TRANSLATION

According to Michaël Oustinoff two of the main characteristics of self-translated texts are, first, that self-translating authors often take advantage of the opportunity to revise, update and even add to their original text, and, second, that more often than not such self-translations are *naturalisantes* or domesticating. I have shown that as the “accoucheur” of the written English version of the Northern Tutchone story of crow, Dr. Legros’ English textualization proved to have much the same characteristics as that found in self-translated texts. My analysis reveals that Dominique Legros’ own self-translation¹⁰⁸ is indeed as Oustinoff predicts it will be. In addition, my analysis will now further reveal that Dr. Legros’ French translation of his own English language textualization of Tommy McGinty’s self-translation into English has the same two main characteristics that are commonly found in self-translated texts. Here are a few examples.

In the “Osprey does not want to share water” episode, crow pretends to die so that his nephew can pretend to mourn him, the better to fool the *tuundy*, and ultimately steal his water and fish. Here is an excerpt of this episode in English:

So his helper, his nephew, the *Kushekok*, comes in. He sees his uncle lying down there, right across from *tuundy*:

“Aaaaaah! My uncle is dead,” he hollers.

The *Kushekok* just pretends. He knows crow’s not dead for good. But just the same, he cries:

“My uncle!” He means *ih ndoa*, my mother’s brother.

“*Ih ndoaa, aaaah, aaah, aah, ah, aah, aaah; my mother’s brother, ih ndoaa, aaah, aaah, aah, ah...*” My dear mother’s brother.

¹⁰⁸ By “self-translation” I mean Dr. Legros’ self-translation of his English foreword, introduction and afterword and not his translation of his English language textualization of McGinty’s crow story.

From there, the *t'ots'ya'* birds hear *Kushekok* crying louder and louder. *Kushekok* sure can sound pretty sad when he wants to. They rush in through the bush. They break everything down there (1999, 55).

The French translation reads:

Alors le *Kushekok*, le neveu du corbeau, entre dans le campement. Il voit le corps de son oncle maternel étendu là, juste en face du *tuundye*. Il se met à hurler tant sa peine est grande :

« Aaaaaah ! Aaaaaah ! mon oncle maternel est mort ! »

Il fait juste semblant. Il sait que le corbeau n'est pas mort pour vrai. Ça ne l'empêche pas pour autant de brailler de désespoir :

« *ih ndo*, mon... oncle... »

Le *Kushekok* continue à s'époumoner de douleur.

"Ih ndoaa... aaah... aaah... aah... ah... aah, aaah, mon oncle. Ih ndoaa...

aaaaah... aaah... aah... ah, mon cher oncle...

En disant « *ih ndo*, mon oncle », il veut dire mon oncle maternel. Quand il crie *ih ndoaaa...*, c'est *ih ndoa* et non plus *ih ndo* tout court, et *ih ndoa*, c'est plus poli — quelque chose comme « mon cher oncle maternel » ou « monsieur mon cher oncle maternel adoré ».

Pendant ce temps, là-bas dans les bois, les oiseaux-*t'ots'ya'* entendent le *Kushekok* brailler de plus en plus fort. Le *Kushekok* est vraiment très fort pour se rendre malheureux lorsqu'il le veut ! Les *t'ots'ya'* s'engouffrent dans les fourrés. Ils cassent tout ce qui gêne leur avancée (2003, 69-70—underlining added).

I have underlined the sections that have no counterpart in the English source text. As can be readily seen, some of the translator's additions fall under the heading of mere *étoffement* or expansion, but the most substantial part—almost an entire sentence—is a major ethnographic expansion on the source text.

In the “Crow throws his old blanket away” episode, the following passage occurs near the beginning of the English version:

The skin is pretty small—about six or seven inches by five. And it is not too thick at all. But in the old days it didn't matter: Indians made blankets with it because it was really warm and light. I should know. My grandma made one for me when I was a kid. I remember that. She took lots of those skins and cut long straps out of each one. Then she knitted these straps together. Just like you make a basket with a tree's fine roots!

Here is the same passage in French translation:

Quand on le dépouille, on a une toute petite peau d'à peu près un demi-pied par un demi-pied. La fourrure n'est vraiment pas très épaisse du tout. Mais autrefois, ça n'avait pas d'importance. Les Indiens arrivaient à s'en faire des couvertures très chaudes et en même temps très légères... J'en sais quelque chose. Lorsque j'étais enfant, ma grand-mère m'en a fabriqué une. Je m'en souviens bien. Elle a pris un grand nombre de ces fourrures de tsaw et elle a découpé chacune d'elles en une lanière aussi longue que possible. Un peu comme on épluche une patate en ne faisant qu'une seule épluchure. Ensuite, elle a comme tricoté toutes ces lanières pour en faire une couverture. Elle s'y est prise comme quand elle tressait un panier avec de petites racines ! (2003, 78—underlining added)

Again, I have underlined the sections that have no counterpart in the source text. This time, they are nearly all ethnographic expansions upon an already essentially ethnographic passage of the English text.

In the "Crow steals the sun" episode we find this short ethnographic explanation in the English text:

You know, long time ago some big shot Indians used to have *handye'* too. They work for them. These workers would be some kids with no parents and relations or some people they would have grabbed away from someone else. And that too comes from crow's time. All everything that happened after with people, later on, crow did it for them ahead of time. You see, he's the one who told the trout about kidnapping his wife (1999, 93).

Here is Legros' French translation:

Vous savez, autrefois certains des Indiens les plus riches avaient aussi des *hāndye'*. Ces esclaves travaillaient pour eux. La plupart du temps, c'étaient des orphelins sans parenté... Ces riches les avaient pris pour eux et les avaient élevés. Parfois, c'étaient des enfants qu'ils avaient carrément volés à d'autres gens, après les avoir massacrés. D'autres fois, c'étaient des gens qui s'étaient vendus pour rembourser des choses qu'on leur avait passées... Dans ce temps-là, tous les hommes portaient les cheveux longs, mais pas les esclaves. Leurs patrons les leur brûlaient pour que les visiteurs étrangers puissent voir qu'ils avaient des hāndye'. Et puis, comme ça, quand un esclave réussissait à s'enfuir, n'importe qui pouvait voir que c'était un esclave en fuite. Alors il avait le droit de le prendre et de le garder... Et tout ça remonte aussi à l'époque du corbeau. Tout ce qui s'est passé avec les gens par la suite, le corbeau l'avait déjà fait pour eux par avance. Vous voyez, c'est même lui qui a donné au touladi l'idée de kidnapper sa femme (2003, 114—underlining added).

Here we note a large amount of expansion of the ethnographic data over the much shorter original English text.

In the English version of the “Ho-Hei, Ho-Hei...” episode we read the following passage:

Well, he's about a mile or two upstream. He slipped away through the bush and headed for the river again. He landed one or two bends above these people's town. This way, they couldn't see what he was going to do. And now he's just finished making five rafts out of some pieces of driftwood. Yeah, five of them. He picks lots of thick moss from the ground and loads each raft with lots of it. Next thing, he sets the paddles the way they're supposed to go on rafts. Then he tells these bunches of moss:

“Now you can paddle. Look here. You do that and this” (1999, 121).

Here is the same passage in French translation:

Pas étonnant ! il se trouve deux ou trois kilomètres¹⁰⁹ en amont ! Il s'est enfui par le bois pour retourner ensuite vers le fleuve. Maintenant, il y a un ou deux méandres entre le village et l'endroit où il se trouve. Comme ça les gens ne peuvent voir ce qu'il fabrique. Il est en train de terminer cinq radeaux. Il les a faits avec du bois flotté, des branches et des troncs échoués là sur la plage depuis longtemps. Oui ! Il en a déjà fait cinq ! Maintenant, il arrache de grosses bottes de mousse dans un sous-bois. C'est la sorte de mousse que les voyageurs canadiens français appellent des « têtes de femmes » — la mousse qui monte en boule et tout en hauteur. Il les rapporte et en place une bonne quantité sur chacun des radeaux. Dernière chose : il installe des rames comme elles doivent se retrouver placées sur un vrai radeau. Puis il parle aux bottes de mousse :

« Maintenant, allez-y, ramez ! Regardez ! Vous faites comme ci, puis comme ça ! » (2003, 143—underlining added).

As in the previous selections the underlined passages mark additional ethnographic data with no counterpart in the English source text.

It would be pointless to continue piling up examples of passages that have been expanded with additional ethnographic data in French translation. They abound throughout. Just as Oustinoff predicts most self-translating authors do, and, as my analysis shows, as the “accoucheur” of the written

¹⁰⁹ Note that for the most part the word “mile” is transferred into French unchanged, though, in a few instances, as in this passage, the word “kilomètre” is substituted.

version of the Northern Tutchone story of crow, Dominique Legros obviously took advantage of the opportunity to revise, update and add to his original text. His translation—as Oustinoff also predicts self-translations usually are and as the self-translations of “accoucheurs” of traditional Aboriginal narratives (at least in the present case) are as well—is moreover *naturalisante* or domesticating, though it is so with a twist upon the kind of domestication that Oustinoff encountered in his own research. By Legros’ own admission, however, his original translation was indeed a domesticating one in accordance with Oustinoff’s understanding of the word *naturalisante*, given that he originally produced a low register Franco-Français target text and it was only when faced with Jean Grosjean’s objections that he then opted to switch to a low-register Québécois French text, but when his Québec colleague objected just as strenuously, he produced what he describes as a generally neutral text. What my analysis shows, however, is that what he actually produced was a doubly domesticated translation, both Franco-Français and Franco-Québécois at one and the same time. As far as I can discover, this has seldom, if ever, been done before, and, as already pointed out, the resulting text is so unusual that at times this has the curious consequence of appearing to largely neutralise the domestication effect. That is one kind of domestication encountered in this translation. The French text also features a second kind of domestication, one that Michaël Oustinoff never encountered in his research either. I am referring to the wealth of ethnographic data that the self-translator/accoucheur added in translation. And let us not forget that a large amount of ethnographic data that were not in the recorded Tutchone text had already been added to the English text.

This occurred either at the time of the translation from Tutchone into English when Tommy McGinty answered the ethnographer's numerous questions, almost always designed to clarify or expand upon various ethnographic points, or in the final editing process when the ethnographer added more such data in such a way as to appear to readers to have been woven into the story by the Tutchone storyteller himself. The second kind of domestication that I am referring to then is domestication into the language of ethnography. Some translators translating other people's texts are known to practice the first kind of domestication found here, but it is highly doubtful that any but a self-translating and birth-assisting ethnographer would dare practice the second kind.

A COMPARISON OF ALL KNOWN¹¹⁰ WRITTEN VERSIONS OF THE SHORTEST EPISODE
OF THE STORY OF CROW AS TOLD BY TOMMY MCGINTY

The final task that I asked Lizzie Hall to perform was to transcribe each and every word uttered by Tommy McGinty when he first recorded this episode in Northern Tutchone for Dominique Legros in August 1984, and then to translate each of those words individually into English; in other words, I asked her to do a word by word interlinear translation of this episode. I asked her to do this a little more than two months after she had done the initial oral sentence by sentence translations for me. My reason for wanting this done was to produce a word by word translation that could serve as a basis for comparison with all the other translations and textualizations of the same episode. I reasoned that this would be useful to determine what may

¹¹⁰ Known to me

have been gained and/or lost with each step that saw this traditional aboriginal narrative transformed from a strictly oral tradition to a first published version in English and then a second published version in French. What I had not foreseen however was how difficult this work would prove to be for Mrs. Hall. When I asked her to spell Tommy McGinty's words and then translate each individually, at first she simply did not understand what I wanted. The very notion seemed utterly foreign to her understanding. But I patiently persisted and she seemed to get it and so I played a short section, perhaps half a sentence of Tommy McGinty's words. She wanted more—a whole sentence, after which, to my dismay, she began to write words in English! And no amount of suggestions that she ought to do it the other way around had any effect: it just had to be written in English first as far as she was concerned. I had no choice but to relent and let her proceed as she wanted. She had me play an entire sentence over and over until she had got each and every one of its words committed to her short-term memory. Now this had some unfortunate effects. For example, as Mrs. Hall explained several times, the order of the words in a Northern Tutchone sentence is often opposite to the normal word order of an English sentence. The way she explained it to me, I would suggest that a Northern Tutchone sentence can sometimes be very close to a perfect mirror-image of an English sentence. Another difficulty consists in that Tutchone words, and this is particularly true of Tutchone verbs, tend to be specific to certain situations or procedures so that certain meanings that must be added to verbs in English in the form of subjects and complements would be superfluous in Tutchone because they are always already implicit in the verb itself and so the number of words in a

Tutchone sentence tends to be less than that of the equivalent English sentence. Also, in Northern Tutchone, according to Mrs. Hall, there are considerably more correct ways of expressing any given concept, idea or action than there are in English, and so each speaker's way of expressing him or herself is more varied and individualized than in English. In short, there is a wider range of correct ways of expressing oneself in Tutchone than in English. This is why Lizzie Hall listened to a sentence and then wrote out a possible English translation. Then she listened to it again and noted that Tommy McGinty had used such and such a word rather than another, and realising that that particular word implied some further meaning, she erased (and occasionally crossed off) a word, say, and replaced it with a different English word. And then, after having me play the Tutchone sentence again, she would proceed to more changes and corrections/modifications. This was then repeated many times. Then she would proceed to a translation of her English sentence back into Tutchone and write that in the line beneath the English words, but warning me that, because of the mirror effect of these two languages, the Tutchone words beneath the English words were almost never the translation of those English words immediately above but rather that of those at the other end of the English sentence, and she also wanted me to keep in mind that quite often a single Tutchone word translated several English words. This done, she would then compare her Tutchone sentence with her English equivalent, this, accompanied by much muttering and puzzled facial expressions and then she would invariably say, "I missed a word" and proceed to revise her Tutchone sentence by adding or changing some words, though most often the changes involved the addition of further

words. This comparison phase would be repeated many times before she eventually asked me to replay Tommy McGinty's original sentence again. This would occasion several changes to both her Tutchone and English sentence, as well as several more replays of the source Tutchone sentence, along with much further erasing, crossing off and replacing and adding further words in both her English and Tutchone sentence. Needless to say, this was a very painstaking and time consuming process. As a result, after two full days of work at the \$200 per day that I was paying her, we only managed to get 2 minutes and 9 seconds of Tommy McGinty's words transcribed and translated. We stopped there because that was precisely the length of Tommy McGinty's Tutchone-language recording of the story of the bow shooting contest between crow and tooneye, and, quite frankly, my student's budget simply did not allow me to proceed any further. In the end, I had only managed to convince Mrs. Hall to produce a true word by word translation of only two short sentences.

When one compares Mrs. Hall's word by word and earlier sentence by sentence translations with the transcriptions of Tommy McGinty's self-translation, one notes that McGinty's version is more detailed, and this is true even when excluding those details that he supplied at Dominique Legros' promptings. This suggests that he was knowingly adding such details for the benefit of non-Tutchone audiences whom he must have realised would require more details than a strictly Tutchone audience would.

Here are the different versions of the bow shooting contest episode, beginning with Lizzie Hall's Tutchone transcription and corresponding English

translation, which, as can be seen, she insisted had to be written on the line above the corresponding Tutchone text.

"TOONEYE AND TS'KE BOW SHOOTING CONTEST" ¹¹¹

Going down¹¹²
Ade ak'aa

he came to where People stay,
Dän ná ch'e shu T'a Ke'in,

he came to where People stay.
Dän ná ch'e shu T'a Ke'in.

Brother in law, Brother in law,
El'e El'e

he said.
a ne'in.

Me¹¹³ I'm older, he said.
Sun inyethi echie.

What, you're only a kid.
Sh'e ach'é nun dunen tá ech'e.

It's me¹¹⁴ made the world.
Sun ech'éa nan he ch'in.

Then we would know who is older.
Du'a de hu'e gh'a hu yet'si he n'a medan clow thi á ná.

We would know who is older
Hukke de medan ach'o a ch'e ke hugn'a yets'l ne doc

¹¹¹ Note that all of the line breaks are Lizzie's own and are due to her running out of space at the end of lines in the notebook in which she was writing rather than any deliberate intention on her part to break any sentence into lines. When I asked her about this, she stated that had the sheet of paper been wide enough, she would have used one line for each of Tommy McGinty's complete sentences (which she marked with a capital at the beginning and a period at the end). (See appendix 3 for a scanned reproduction of her original working copy)

¹¹² Lizzie insists that "with a boat" is implicit here.

¹¹³ Implicit here is that "Me" refers to Tooneye, whose name the narrator will reveal shortly.

¹¹⁴ Implicit here is that "me" refers to crow since a native Northern Tutchone listener would already know that it was crow who made the world. But keep in mind that these English pronouns have no Tutchone counterparts and are merely a convenient way to render information that is implicit in the original.

if it happen again, if his arrow
dech'u ha che de

never reach
hu trá

the other side.
na ke'in da kue de.

If you are older than me
He thi en na de huye

know if your arrow reach
he le entra na le

the other side.
k'u de.

If your arrow land other
In trá hnani ku'o

side, let's beat each other that way.
de, a le clu da hu ts'in.

To see who win
Medan hu flow k'e

Tooneye he shot his arrow. (Tooneye¹¹⁵ is a high word)
Tooneye eddá tr'a.

It (land¹¹⁶) on the shore.
Tá mẽ lá kue.

OK now I beat you.
Aku ene f'ow.

Then from camp robber he made
Hák'e ts'u k'e ts'in

arrow from willow,
tr'a hed ts'in,

Crow he made arrow from willow¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁵Tooneye: Because this is a "high word" and therefore particularly difficult to translate, Lizzie is not sure what precise creature Tooneye is, though she thinks it might be a bird, but definitely not an eagle.

¹¹⁶Lizzie wanted to make sure I was aware that the word "land" never appears in Tommy McGinty's 1984 Northern Tutchone version and that to include it within brackets in the English translation is merely a convenient way to translate a Northern Tutchone expression that has no exact counterpart in English and whose closest equivalent in that language is "to land," thus: "tá mẽ": shore, and "lá kue": land on. Note that this is the first of the only two sentences that I managed to get Lizzie to translate "word for word".

Ts'k'e trá hedts'in d'éá ts'in.

(Literally: "crow arrow made willow from", as follows: Ts'k'e = crow; trá = arrow; hedts'in = made; d'éá = willow; ts'in = from. The words "crow" and "arrow" could have been placed at either end, together or apart, without in any way changing the meaning of the sentence)

Then Crow shot arrow with left hand.

Hekk'e Ts'k'e tlon ts'in sh'e ade trá.

Then arrow fall short from

Akk'e ade trá k'e adan de n'a cl'aá

where he wants to shoot.

add'e ne gond'eá¹¹⁸ ane.

Then he shot again.

Gond'eá.

Then this time arrow went right across

Akk'e gondéa náde'in ke tra déa de che

the river.

tage non ch'in ts'in doo.

This time arrow went out

Akk'e ache tra hunon

of sight.

o ekk'o.

Then it went over two

Akk'e ache ddtho leke dikntoo

Mountains.

koe.

Now who is older?

Ch'a medan huthi huling he?

When I shot arrow again,

Akk'e ache adeke ki ddtho leke

arrow went over two mountains.

ch'e detokovi.

Then he said now who is older?

Ekk'e ne'in nan thlo thi enna hu che he?

It's right you said you're older.

¹¹⁷ This very short sentence is the second of only two that I managed to convince Mrs. Hall to truly translate word by word

¹¹⁸ Lizzie says that "gond'eá" is a high word derived from the Tlingit language meaning "he wanted arrow to lift right up to other side".

Ak'o oyene nan tlo thi eche dene.

It's true you are older, from here
Tlow dene en tlow thi eche dene

on I call you Elder as you said.
eke ucho en de ts'in ne.

THE TRANSCRIPTION OF LIZZIE HALL'S JULY 2006 ORAL SENTENCE BY SENTENCE
RETRANSLATION

34:22: tape

LH: And then after that, from there he start go again.

PC: Huh, huh. So he's travelling again.

LH: Yeah.

34:54: tape

LH: Then he said he landed. This man was staying there. And when he come up the river he said, brother-in-law, brother-in-law! He said that man was really big.

PC: Yeah.

LH: And then he said to this...just turn it back a little bit more!

PC: Okay.

35:54: tape

LH: And then he said this...remember when he said my brother in law?

PC: Yeah.

LH: He said I'm an old person, that man he say, that one who stay there. And you, he said, you're just a little...you know how you say, little brat?

PC: Yeah.

LH: You're just not old, he say, you're young!

PC: So that man said that to crow?

LH: No the crow...that man...that elder say to the crow.

PC: Okay.

LH: Yeah, he said, you just young, he said. Me, I'm an elder!

PC: Okay, but who called who a brother in law, is that crow?

LH: That was crow. Brother in law, brother in law, he said when he was coming up.

PC: Okay.

36:56: tape (Narrator heard saying what sounds like "GUNDIE YAY" very loudly—a shout in fact)

LH: And then he said, let's find out who is the oldest, he said. Let's use the arrow and bow, he said. Let's see who own go the furthest.

PC: Okay. So that's how they gonna find out who's the oldest. Okay.

37:33: tape (loud "Gundie Yay" again)

LH: Then he said this old man, he used the arrow, he shoot, then he said just about made the shore. And then this crow he made the arrow out of willow, and then he say when he shoot, it just start falling half way, but gundie yay, he said; move up again!

PC: Okay.

LH: So it go up again.

PC: Okay, so he's talking to it; does it do that?

LH: Remember he talk anything happens?

PC: Yeah.

LH: He say (sounds like "gundie yay"), that means go up again,

PC: Yeah, yeah, okay.

38: 59: tape

LH: (laughs) That was in Tlingit language, he said (sounds like "gundie yay!")—that means move up. So he said just when it start to shore it start go down again he say gundie yay then it moves back up.

PC: Goes back up and it keeps going. Okay. So he's going to win that. (laughs)

LH: Huh, huh.

39:28: tape

LH: Then he said to that elder man, look, he said, mine went over two mountains already, he said. Now who all went further, he tell that man there.

PC: Yeah, yeah.

LH: Crow.

PC: Yeah.

39:54: tape

LH: So that elder man, he said I'm older than you, he said now I'm gonna call you older man, he said, you really mean it when you said you were old.

PC: Okay.

LH: I'm gonna call you elder from here on, he said.

40:21: tape

LH: And then he said, now I'm gonna believe you, he said, you're older, he said, and you know everything.

PC: Okay.

40:51: tape

LH: Oh, yah, I forgot he said he made some fish too, you know how you throw willow through the gill?

PC: Yeah.

LH: And you just hook them together there from behind each other?

PC: Yeah.

LH: That's what he did, he said, too.

PC: Okay.

LH: Now he gonna pick that up.

PC: Okay. So he'd done that already?

LH: Huh, huh, already.

PC: Okay.

41:21: tape

THE STUDENT TRANSCRIPTION OF TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1984 ORAL SELF-
TRANSLATION¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ This is the actual Word document of the original transcription done by his research assistant that Dominique Legros emailed me in 2005.

D.L.: Continuation from tape 15, this is tape 16 side 1, and this is the continuation of crow story, another section.□

T.M.: And the crow, he go down the river again. Down to look for some more any bad animal, or good people. That kind, he go through. Well he coming and pretty soon, eagle... toondyeh, eagle¹²⁰ [inaudible at 015]. They call him toondyeh and he was man, Indian. Walking around, I guess, and same with crow. He come in to that man, and they talk together there. He said, who oldest one? he said. Crow said, I'm the oldest one. And toondyeh said, I'm older than you. No, he said, I'm older than you. He says, okay then. We'll try it, we race. We'll race... shoot with the bow and arrow. Then we know for sure who oldest one. So he say, go ahead. You go first, you shoot first. And across the river, toondyeh shoot with the bow and arrow. Bow and arrow, he nearly get across the river. Close to shore, he go in the water. And toondyeh say to crow, you see that now how I shoot? he said. Crow said, I'm gonna try, he said. I'm older, I'm older more. Me, I know that, he said. You can't beat me, you're only kid, he said. So... magpie feather, I guess, what he using for bow and arrow. And he use it on a bow and arrow. He talk to him, he go like that. And crow, he shoot the bow and arrow.□

D.L.: Who talk to that magpie feather?□

T.M.: Crow.□

D.L.: Ok. He do Indian medicine, or some kind?□

T.M.: Some kind of like a medicine. And he said, that bow and arrow going down, down and he say, up again, he said. And that bow and arrow going up again. He going down this way again, he say up again. Keep a going, he going over, he went over one high mountain.□

D.L.: Oh.□

T.M.: That's why when the magpie fly, he's just like that, he don't follow straight.□

D.L.: Oh yeah, Ok. Tommy shows me magpie flies up and down, go up and down. That's right, yeah.□

T.M.: Yeah. And toondyeh got beat. He say you're right, you oldest one alright. And I was kid me, I know now, he said. And he told him, what kind you live on? He say he live on fish. He said that's good. And he go from there again. He go from there again, he come in to a bunch of people staying too, below that.□

Note Legros' questions, and how they elicit additional information and ethnographic details that the storyteller would not have normally included in his narration; this is typical of the entire McGinty 1984 self-translation. Also, as the translator of his own Northern Tutchone narration, Tommy McGinty obviously knew better than his niece what it was that he originally said.

However, his English version is as much an adaptation as it is a translation

¹²⁰ Note that McGinty is explicit; toondye is an eagle; and yet recall that Lizzie Hall said that tooneye is a high word and therefore very difficult to translate correctly, adding that tooneye is probably a bird, but definitely not an eagle.

and it is obviously influenced by Dominique Legros' questions as well. One also wonders; could Lizzie Hall's knowledge of traditional Northern Tutchone as spoken by her uncle be less complete than his? She herself has already answered when she told me that he taught her everything she knows. In addition, having spent a decade in residential school, an institution designed specifically for "taking the Indian-ness out of young Indians", among other things by forbidding their speaking their own language, her linguistic knowledge, extensive as it might be, could not possibly match that of her uncle, who spent roughly the same number of years learning classical Tutchone at the hands of a widely recognized expert. It is also obvious that her knowledge of the traditional Northern Tutchone names for birds is less complete than that of the expert hunter that Tommy McGinty was. For example, she says that crow used camp robber feathers on his arrows, while McGinty says that crow used magpie feathers. Camp robbers, as they are often called in Yukon, are not magpies; they're Canada jays (sometimes also called grey jays or "whisky jacks"). Mayo Northern Tutchone elder, Catharine Germaine, whom I asked if she'd be willing to do some word for word retranslations of Tommy McGinty's Tutchone narration for me upon recommendation by Yukon Native Language Centre linguist John Ritter, told me that she could not possibly take on such a job, first, because of the differences between the Mayo and the Pelly Crossing dialects of Northern Tutchone and second because of Tommy McGinty's own dialect, which she stated was somewhat different and more complex than ordinary Pelly Crossing Northern Tutchone. When I asked Mrs. Germain who in her opinion would be best qualified to translate Mr. McGinty's narration, she answered

that only two persons were, his nieces, Rachel TomTom and Lizzie Hall.

Should we conclude that Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone should be described as "classical" Northern Tutchone while Lizzie Hall's would be better described as "modern" Northern Tutchone"? I am inclined to think so, though I am of course not linguistically qualified to decide, though much of what Mrs. Hall told me, together with my comparison of her translation with her uncle's, especially in the translation of animal's names and in her difficulties translating "high words", tend to support that conclusion.

MY TRANSCRIPTION OF THE "WHO'S THE OLDEST IN THE WORLD EPISODE"

(Start at 0:00)

DL: Continuation from tape 15, this is tape 16, side 1 and this is the continuation of crow story, another section now.

TM: And huh... crow he went... he go down river again... down to look for some more any bad animal or good people. That kind he go through. He comin' and pretty soon, eagle, tuundy (stammers) eagle... eagle pointer (sic) he called tuundy, he's was man – Indian. Walk around I guess, same with crow, he coming to to that man. He and they, they talk together there. He said huh, who, who (stammers) who oldest one, he said? Crow he said I'm the oldest one and tuundy said, he said I'm, I'm the... older than you. No, he said, I'm old more than you. He says OK then, we'll try it, we'll race, we'll race, shoot with a bow and arrow and we'll know for sure who, who, who oldest one. (loud throat clearing) So he said go ahead and you go first, you shoot first. And across the river tuundy shoot with a bow and arrow. One arrow (stammers) he nearly get across, cross the river, close to shore, he go in the water and tuundy say to crow, you, you see that, that (stammers) that now, how I shoot, he said? Crow he said, I'm gonna try, he said. And I'm, I'm old more, I'm old more me; I know that, he said. You can't beat me, you're only kid, he said. So magpie... feather I guess he going use it for the bow and arrow... use on the bow and arrow. He talk to him, he go like that. And crow he shoot the bow and arrow...

DL: Who talk to that magpie feath... feather?

TM: Crow.

DL: OK he do Indian medicine of some kind?

TM: Some kind of like medicine. And he said that bow and arrow he going down, down, and then he said, UP AGAIN! he said (I use capitals to signal that TM shouts these two words). And that bow and arrow go on up again. He going down this way again, he said UP AGAIN! Keep it going till on he going over, he going over, huh, one... one high mountain.

DL: Ah!

TM: That's why that magpie when he fly he just like that, he don't fly straight.

DL: Oh yeah, Tommy he shows me, magpie flies, go up and down and go up and down...

TM: Yeah...

DL: ...and so that's right, yeah.

TM: And tuundye got beat, he say, you're right; you (stammers) oldest one alright and I was kid me, I know now, he said. And he told him (stammers) can you live on it? He say he live on a fish, like that. He said that's good. And he go from, from there again.

(End at 3:33)

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT TRANSCRIPTION OF TOMMY MCGINTY'S 1984 SELF TRANSLATION OF THE BOW SHOOTING CONTEST EPISODE

First, Dr. Legros' student's transcription is fairly accurate, though, as my quadruply-checked re-transcription shows, it is not error free. In the very first sentence, for example, in which Dr. Legros assigns the tape a number and states that this is "the continuation of [the] crow story" and that this is "another section now", the word "now" is not transcribed. Having done a substantial amount of this kind of transcription, I can attest this is one of the most common errors that transcribers must constantly guard against. This is how such errors happen: The transcriber plays a full sentence and then stops the tape. The pronunciation was relatively clear and she had no difficulty

understanding any of the words. She therefore feels there is no need to replay the sentence before typing it. As she types, however, she may well forget one word—and so omit it altogether as in the case at hand—she may also unknowingly invert the order of some of the words, just as she might sometimes inadvertently substitute a synonym for one or more of the original words. All of those errors are common; I've caught myself making all of them. There is only one way of ensuring that they don't occur: checking and rechecking one's accuracy by replaying the tape while following along with one's written transcription. I have found that only by performing such checks systematically at least four times can I be absolutely certain that my work is error free. Others may require fewer rechecks, but no one can dispense with them altogether, of that I am certain.

In Tommy McGinty's opening sentence we note the mistranscription of "And huh... crow he went..." which has been transformed into "and the crow". A bit further on, the student transcriber adds "well" to the beginning of a sentence, which a close listen to the tape shows was never uttered by the narrator. In the next sentence the student deems one word "inaudible", possibly because he or she did not think the word that was clearly said—"pointer"—made any sense. However, if that was indeed his or her reasoning, it is unfortunate that he or she had lost sight of the fact that it is not for a transcriber to decide what does or does not make sense, but for the anthropologist who pays him or her to transcribe faithfully what he or she hears the narrator say. The transcriber then starts a new sentence—"They call him toondyeh"—while, as my re-transcription shows, the narrator actually said "he called tuundye". There are two minor additions in the next sentence

that may well be due to a simple failure to recognise Tommy McGinty's intermittent stammering, sometimes at the beginning of words, sometimes at the end, sometimes at both ends of a word and sometimes none at all. In principle, a transcriber soon becomes aware of this and is all the more careful not to add articles or prefixes or affixes that are not really there. In the following sentence the student fails to mention a considerable amount of stammering associated with the word "who". This omission does not alter the sense of the sentence in an appreciable way, but it does take away or at least hold back a piece of information regarding Mr. McGinty's delivery. The student transcribes the second part of the next sentence thus: "And toondyeh said, I'm older than you". My re-transcription of the same part of the sentence reads as follows: "and tuundye said, he said I'm, I'm the... older than you". Again, the gist of both transcriptions is the same, but the student failed to record the repetition—"tuundye said, he said"—and the false start—"I'm, I'm the..." before the final "older than you". Since repetition is a common, typical feature of oral storytelling, failing to record it is a serious omission, for how else is an editor to know if and where the storyteller made use of this storytelling device, given that he or she relies on the transcription? A few sentences on the student fails to note McGinty's loud throat clearing, a frequent feature on all of the McGinty tapes, and something that the student couldn't possibly have missed, given that Tommy McGinty's throat clearing can be so very loud and so sharply pitched that it makes one want to tear off the headphones, so sharp is the pain virtually every time it occurs. Again, this kind of omission may not alter the gist of the overall narration; nevertheless, it's effect is that an important piece of information regarding the quality of the

storyteller's delivery is just not there—and, as previously stated, it is not for a transcriber to decide which bits of information are relevant and which are not. A few sentences on the student has McGinty having crow say, "I'm older, I'm older more. Me, I know that he said." My re-transcription of the same sentence reads: "And I'm, I'm old more, I'm old more me; I know that, he said", which is not quite the same.

To avoid tediousness, I will not provide a sentence by sentence analysis of the rest of the episode, though any reader who cares to can easily perform such an analysis for him- or herself and see that the quality of the student's transcription remains similar throughout. I will however point out what I consider to be the most serious omission of the student's transcription of this short episode, that is, failing to indicate in any way that the words "UP AGAIN!"¹²¹ are shouted very loudly twice. This omission results (as can be seen in the text of the 1999 Mercury series publication) in this significant information regarding the exceptional quality of the delivery of those two words (compared to the rest of the narration of this episode) is not indicated in the ultimate published text (and Dr. Legros is nowise to blame for this, for how could he have known about something that was omitted from the transcription?). On their own, such errors may not appreciably alter the story or the sense that readers form regarding the narrator's delivery, but added together they can become significant.

DOMINIQUE LEGROS' 1999 ENGLISH TEXTUALIZATION¹²²

¹²¹ This "UP AGAIN" is Tommy McGinty's English language equivalent of "Gond'eá", a word that Mrs. Hall insisted is "high language" and derived from the Tlingit language.

¹²² Note that since Mr. McGinty did not choose to retell this episode in 1991 (Legros 1999, 240), this textualization is necessarily based on the 1984 telling.

Who's the Oldest One in the World?

Crow drifts downriver, down to look for more animals or people, down to check who's bad and who's good. He wants to go through them all.

Well, pretty soon he comes to the osprey¹²³, to *tuundy*, the one he stole water and fish from when he made the world, earlier on. I guess *tuundy* must have kept walking around the world. Just the same as crow. He is a kind of eagle, but at that time he was like a man...like an Indian. Crow comes to that man and they talk together.

"Who's the oldest?" *tuundy* asks him

"I'm the oldest one," says crow.

"I'm older than you," argues *tuundy*.

"No, I'm much older than you," disagrees crow.

"No, no," says *tuundy*.

"O.K.," answers crow, "then, we're going to check it. Let's shoot arrows. We race with that. Let's try it. Then we know for sure who's the oldest one. Go ahead. Go first. You shoot first."

Tuundy aims at the other side of the river. He shoots and his arrow nearly gets across. It falls into the water but just close to the shore.

"You see that now? How I shoot?" he asks crow,

"Well," crow tells him, "I'm going to try now. You'll see I'm older. Me, I know it. There's no way you can beat me. You're only a kid."

He takes an arrow out. It's got magpie feathers at the end. I guess it's what he uses to make his arrows fly straight. He gets it out and starts to medicine. Something like a medicine anyway. He talks into the feathers with his mind¹²⁴.

"This arrow goes down," he tells them feathers, "you make it go up again; it falls down, you bring it back up; don't let it hit the ground."

He takes his bow and shoots. The arrow goes a little way and starts to fall down.

"Up again," he says in his mind.

That arrow flies right back up. It hustles a little way and then down again.

"Up, up, up," he orders the feathers.

The arrow goes higher up.

Crow keeps it going like that for a while. His arrow goes over one whole high mountain, never touching the ground. And did you see magpies fly? They still go around just like that, you know: always down and up, up and down, never in a straight line. That's why. It's all because of crow. What he did and everything.

Anyway, *tuundy* gets beat. He tells crow:

"You're right, you're the oldest one all right. Me, I was just kid. Now I know."

Crow asks him:

"What kind of thing do you live on?"

"I live on fish," replied *tuundy*.

"That's good..."

And from there, crow gets into his canoe and goes out again (Legros 1999, 133-4).

¹²³ Note that Legros is more specific than even McGinty was; according to him, *tuundy* is not just any sort of eagle, he's an osprey, thus practicing expansion.

¹²⁴ Note that a comparison with the transcription reveals that this paragraph is almost entirely due to McGinty's answers to Legros' direct questions rather than due to McGinty's own initiative.

Qui est le plus vieux du monde?

Le corbeau descend dans le courant du fleuve. Il compte rencontrer de nouveaux animaux, de nouvelles gens — voir qui est méchant, qui est bien. Il veut aller voir chez tout le monde...

Et bientôt, il tombe sur le *tuundye* — l'orfraie, le pygargue. Celui à qui il a volé l'eau et les poissons quand il a refait la terre. Au tout début !

Il faut croire que ce *tuundye* a continué de se balader à travers le monde. Tout comme a fait le corbeau ! L'orfraie est une sorte d'aigle pêcheur, mais à l'époque c'était aussi un être humain, un Indien. Le corbeau va trouver le *tuundye*. Ils se mettent à discuter :

« Qui est le plus vieux du monde ? demande le *tuundye*.

— C'est moi le plus vieux, répond le corbeau.

— Je suis bien plus vieux que toi proteste le *tuundye*.

— Oh non ! moi, je suis beaucoup plus vieux que toi ! répète le corbeau.

— Non ! Non ! réplique le *tuundye*.

— Eh bien d'accord ! on va vérifier ! dit le corbeau. On va lancer des flèches. On fait un concours avec ça... Allons-y ! Comme ça, on saura pour de vrai qui est le plus vieux. Vas-y ! Commence ! Tire le premier !

Le *tuundye* vise vers l'autre rive. Il tire et sa flèche arrive pratiquement de l'autre côté du fleuve. C'est vrai qu'elle tombe à l'eau, mais vraiment tout près de la berge.

« Hein ! tu as vu ça !... dit le *tuundye*. Tu as vu comment je tire !

— Eh bien !... répond le corbeau, maintenant c'est moi qui essaye ! Tu vas voir que je suis plus vieux. Moi, je le sais ! Il n'y a rien à faire. Tu ne peux pas me battre. Tu n'es qu'un gamin. »

Le corbeau sort une flèche. Elle a des plumes de pie. Faut croire que c'est ce que le corbeau utilise pour que ses flèches volent droit. Le corbeau sort sa flèche et se met à « transpenser ». En tout cas, c'est comme s'il « transpensait ». Son « esprit » parle dans les plumes de pie. Il dit :

« Cette flèche retombe, vous la faites remonter ; elle redescend, vous la faites repartir. Ne la laissez pas tomber... »

Il prend son arc et tire. Sa flèche monte, fait un petit bout de chemin, puis commence à redescendre... Et par son « esprit » il dit aux plumes :

« Relevez-la ! »

La flèche se relève et repart. Elle se dépêche. Mais après une courte distance, elle commence encore à retomber. Et par sa tête le corbeau continue de crier :

« En haut ! En haut ! En haut ! »

La flèche reprend de la hauteur.

Le corbeau continue de faire ça pendant un bon moment. Et sa flèche franchit le fleuve, puis passe au-dessus de toute une grande montagne sans jamais toucher le sol.

Vous avez déjà vu voler des pies ? Vous savez, c'est encore comme ça qu'elles font : ça monte et ça descend, ça remonte... et ça redescend, ça va jamais en ligne droite. Ça vient de cette histoire-là. Tout ça, c'est à cause du corbeau. De ce qu'il a fait ce jour-là, tout et tout...

En tout cas, le *tuundye* est complètement battu. Il dit :

« Corbeau, tu as raison, c'est bien toi qui es le plus vieux. Moi, je ne suis qu'un gamin. Maintenant, je le sais. »

Le corbeau lui demande :

« Comment tu gagnes ta vie, toi ? »

— Moi, j'attrape du poisson, lui répond le *tuundye*.

— Ça c'est bien !... »

À partir de là, le corbeau remonte dans son canot et reprend sa route...
(Legros 2003, 156-7)

IN CONCLUSION, A FINAL LOOK AT A FEW ISSUES

Having come to the end of this thesis, I find that some of the issues raised, especially in the last two chapters, beg for a final reflection. The authorship of published Aboriginal traditional narratives is one such issue. This is not restricted to Dominique Legros' publication of Tommy McGinty's story of crow. It concerns at least one other recent publication of Yukon elders' stories as well. Similarly, the freedom of the translator is an important consideration for Translation Studies. Just how free is any given translator to translate as she or he sees fit? Perhaps not as much as many would like to believe. Then there is the "bad words" issue. What makes a word sound "cute and funny" in Tutchone while its equivalent in English "has mud on its face"? And why did Dominique Legros tell Mary McGinty that there are no bad words in the French edition when a number of such English words has been rendered into French with an equivalent and sometimes a stronger non-equivalent? Another issue that has been raised here also has implications for anthropology as a whole. Forty years ago (1969), Vine Deloria, Jr., wrote in harsh terms about anthropologists. He reiterated much the same charges and added several more in 1996. At least in part because of Deloria's writings, it is no longer possible to do anthropology quite as it was done before, but it is clearly not yet done in the way that some Aboriginal leaders wish that it were. This is why they no longer allow research to be carried out within their territories except under very specific conditions. As a way of reconciling ethnographic writing with the subjects of its writing, ethnographer Paul Rabinow suggested more than two decades ago that, "an anthropology

of anthropology” would be a good starting point. As far as I’ve been able to discover, this has yet to be done. Finally, it is well to remember that Tommy McGinty and his fellow Yukon Aboriginal elders are by no means the only ones who tell stories. As academics we all do something that Aboriginal elders would call “telling stories”. Isn’t it time we stopped seeing the practices of “others” as strange and exotic while proclaiming ours “normal”? Viewed through unbiased eyes, are not our own practices just as strange and just as exotic as the practices of those whom we study?

But first, a word on how the thesis hopes to be an example of how the methods and theories of translation studies and ethnography can be combined to investigate ethnographic translation.

CROSS FERTILIZATION

As I wrote in introduction, I hope that this thesis will serve other scholars as a general model or method by which ethnographic translations might be studied and reported upon. To be useful, such investigations need to systematically follow certain basic steps, many of which have been followed in this enquiry. Other steps might of course be added to better adapt a given enquiry to the particular circumstances of each case studied. Similar studies should make a point, as I have, to define such words and phrases as “text”, “state of text”, “transcription” and “textualization”. This is all the more important that scholars’ definitions of these and similar terms often differ.

A critical direction taken by this study was to consult with all of those most directly involved: the ethnographer and, given Tommy McGinty’s

passing, the members of his immediate family and the Selkirk First Nation. To gain the trust of Aboriginals, scholars must recognise that there are always at least two sides to any "story", and often more. Accordingly, future analyses of ethnographic translations and textualizations of Aboriginal traditional narratives should make consulting with the people most directly concerned an obligatory step. Some might argue that this may yield limited data for collaborations dating back more than fifty years. But there is no valid reason not to at least try and scholars may be surprised to discover just how much relevant data consulting the immediate descendants of those originally involved can yield. For collaborations of the last fifty years, numerous living elders have direct knowledge and vivid memories of such events. I am well aware that given current tensions between First Nations and Academia, scholars might find it difficult to obtain quick answers to their questions. But patience coupled with true humility and openness of mind can overcome considerable mistrust. It takes time and honesty of purpose to gain the trust of any human being; why should it be otherwise with Aboriginals?

A thorough study of any given ethnographic translation and/or textualization of a traditional Aboriginal narrative will necessarily try to determine how a combination of various constraints operated upon each step of converting that traditional Aboriginal narrative into a European language publication. This can only be done in consultation with the Aboriginals concerned, and begins by having the source Aboriginal language narrative retranslated. These are costly and time-consuming undertakings, but they cannot be dispensed with. Without Mrs. Hall's input regarding Tommy McGinty's personal and political goals and her retranslation of his Tutchone

text, it would have been impossible to determine how and why the text of his English self-translation differs from his Tutchone version. What holds true for the Aboriginal half of the collaboration holds true for the academic half as well, except that this cannot be restricted to field research and interviewing the ethnographer. Here, the scholar should perform a “traditional” academic search of the relevant sources such as newspapers, websites, academic publications of all sorts, publishing houses’ own “literature”, websites and press releases, other books published in the same collection, letters exchanged between the ethnographer and his book’s editor(s) and publisher(s) (and when, as in the case studied here, the editors are both famous writers in their own right, a careful study of their literary output and related criticism) together with a close analysis of representative excerpts of the published textualization and/or translation, to name but some of the most obvious.

Numerous and systematic studies of ethnographic translations cannot but stimulate ethnography’s reflections upon its own translation practices; and, as stated in introduction, over a hundred years’ worth of ethnographic translation, the bulk of which has yet to be examined by translation scholars, makes up a voluminous corpus whose study will (as Sherry Simon suggested) “expand the scope of [the discipline] far beyond its traditional focus on literary translation”. Accordingly, it is hoped that this thesis points the way towards a healthy cross-fertilization between ethnography and translation studies.

Ever since I first conceived of this thesis I have struggled trying to decide who is the true author of the books in which the story of crow is published. Is it Tommy McGinty? Is it Dominique Legros? Are they joint authors? There is no doubt that had Tommy McGinty not retold that particular story in that particular way and then translated it into English in just the way that he did for Dominique Legros and his tape recorder, that particular version of the story of crow would have never been published. Similarly, had Dominique Legros not constantly intervened during the translation from Tutchone to English; had he not opted to distil the story that he ultimately published out of all those different tellings, unrelated ethnographic encounters, plus a few ethnographic additions of his own; that particular version of that story would have never been published. Legros points out that other elders tell that story too. That is true, but Legros knows very well that no other elder tells the crow story quite like Tommy McGinty does, and that very few narrations are as rich in details, as extensive in the number of their episodes and as skilfully told as is Tommy McGinty's. Dominique Legros also writes that the story of crow is not Tommy McGinty's alone, that the story belongs to all Athapaskans and that Tommy McGinty's narration could be likened to the performance of a concert pianist who, no matter how talented and how skilful his performance may be, is merely reproducing the notes that he reads in a musical score composed by someone else. Legros adds that Tommy McGinty did not create the story of crow but inherited it from his ancestors and especially from his grandfather, Copper Joe. That is true also, but Copper Joe did not hand his grandson a script of the story of crow¹²⁵.

¹²⁵ When referring to story telling, the idea of a script seems more apt than Legros' notion of

Theirs was an oral world. Copper Joe told young Tommy the story of crow, one episode at a time or more, as the spirit moved him or as best fitted any given occasion. Episodes must have been retold from time to time, though never quite in the same way—just like Tommy McGinty's own episodes varied in scope and content each time he told them, so too must have his grandfather's.

That kind of traditional Aboriginal story was never like a musical score any more than it ever was like a pre-written script that a teller memorised and later declaimed in the way that a stage actor declaims his character's lines on a stage. An Aboriginal story is an organic entity that takes on whatever shape and texture each teller chooses to give it on any given occasion. Granted that there are many basic episodes that are known to all Tutchone¹²⁶—the one where crow loses his beak; the one where he steals the sun; the one where he eats a big fish from the inside; the one where he has himself reborn by making a virgin swallow his spirit disguised as a spec of dirt in cupful of water, and so on—but those are little more than basic ideas for episodes and there are no rules at all as to what circumstances are best suited for the telling of any given episode. It is the individual teller who chooses the occasion for the telling, who supplies the wealth of details and who varies them and who, like Tommy McGinty sometimes did, points out how they account for entirely new sociocultural developments. It is the teller who adds new characters one time and omits some another time, and it is the individual teller who sometimes opts to recombine parts of previously unrelated episodes to create entirely

a musical score.

¹²⁶ And some that are widely known even beyond the Athapaskan language family, as I showed in Chapter 3.

new ones, and, as does Tommy McGinty, adds new twists to account for recent socio-cultural developments. Tommy McGinty did not invent the story of crow (whose creation was clearly a collective undertaking over a lengthy period of time), but he developed his own versions of it, and his versions are different from all other versions ever told. And it is Tommy McGinty's versions and no one else's that Dominique Legros combined and published.

Tommy McGinty cited his main source, Copper Joe. In Aboriginal parlance, by virtue of telling it to him, Copper Joe "gave" the crow story to Tommy McGinty. In that sense, by virtue of telling him the crow story, Tommy McGinty "gave" that story to Dominique Legros. And as we already know, he gave it to him on the understanding that he would in turn "tell" it in a book for Tutchone youth. We also know that the story that Legros tells in his books is different in many ways from the story that McGinty first told in Tutchone on tape, which is itself somewhat different from the story that he later told in English on tape. We also know that if they are not the same, it is for the most part due to Dominique Legros' actions—his questions and his promptings during McGinty's translation; his own editing choices when preparing the manuscript for publication and his further expansions, translation and editorial choices for the French edition. The published versions of the story of crow, then, are not Tommy McGinty's alone; an appreciable part of them must be credited to Dominique Legros.

The "ethnographic" sections of the book—the Foreword, the introduction and the afterword—were all written by Dominique Legros. However, an overwhelming portion of each of them is made up of direct quotations by Tommy McGinty and descriptions of his actions, plus

paraphrasings of McGinty's descriptions of his people's culture, beliefs, world view, way of life and recent history¹²⁷. Without McGinty's considerable contribution, Dr. Legros would have had little to write. There simply is no getting away from it: this book—both the English and the French version—is a co-authored book. In my view, McGinty should therefore have received full co-billing together with Dominique Legros as one of the two authors of the entire book. That he did not is however not surprising, for that is the norm in recent Yukon and Alaska ethnographic publishing. Why?

When we look at Julie Cruikshank's 1992 book, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Histories of Three Yukon Native Elders/by Julie Cruikshank in Collaboration with Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned*, for example, at first glance, its title appears ethical enough since all of Cruikshank's collaborators are duly named on the book's cover. But isn't this ambiguous title in fact meant to obscure a disquieting reality? Is this book a co-authored effort or not? As a closer look shows, only Cruikshank is named as author (by Julie Cruikshank), while the other three women are merely her "collaborators", a term that anthropology uses as synonymous with "informant", and not authors in their own right. And yet, as anyone who reads the book discovers, the greatest part of it consists of narratives that Sidney, Smith and Ned told Cruikshank. That Cruikshank reworked their narratives before publishing them hardly makes them any less co-authors of her book.

What could possibly motivate a respected academic to resort to such an ambiguous title page? Her own profession's expectations, answers Phyllis

¹²⁷ In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros stated that in addition to that obtained from Tommy McGinty, considerable information on Northern Tutchone culture and social organisation was also obtained from Johnny Mack, Sam Jonathan and George Billy.

Morrow, who, in her own collaborative publications with Yup'ik Elsie Mather, was faced with precisely the kind of dilemma that Cruikshank faced:

As the academic member of the team, I have to grapple with the expectation that my contributions to the world of 'the literature' will be valued only insofar as they are original, individually 'owned' insights. This creates a certain pressure toward high-risk interpretations; that is, going out on an intellectual limb to say something new or at least express myself in a unique way. Because of its twin emphases on ownership and authenticity, the academy is suspicious of collaboration at the same time that it applauds the presence of Native voices. The author function asks, 'whose work is this really?' If Elsie Mather is assumed to be the 'real' author, then her byline must be mere tokenism. There is no room for coequal collaboration within the author function (Morrow 1995, 43).

Morrow's explanation also clarifies why both the English and the French publishers of Tommy McGinty's story of crow list but a single author¹²⁸.

Christi Ann Merrill reports struggling with a similarly "vexing" question of authorship. A translation scholar, Merrill translated a Hindi short story entitled "Rijak ki Maryada" by Vijay Dan Detha into English. She gave her translation the title "Professional Honor". "Rijak ki Maryada", however, was not originally written in Hindi, the language of Merrill's source text, but was itself a translation into Hindi by Kailash Kabir from Detha's original Rajasthani. Merrill, who worked with the author and his Hindi translator¹²⁹ in the 1980s, produced a preliminary translation that she included in her MFA thesis in 1998. "If you wanted to be crassly legalistic," she points out, "you could argue that since my English translation of "Professional Honor" was the first copyrighted version of that tale, then the story can be said to belong to me"

¹²⁸ It is possible that valid reasons for crediting only the academic member of a collaborative team resulting in a publication other than that suggested by Phyllis Morrow exist; however, Morrow is the only ethnographer that I was able to find who has written on this subject besides André-Marcel d'Ans' rather awkward explanation summarized on page 256.

¹²⁹ Kailash Kabir, the Hindi translator, worked from Detha's original unpublished Rajasthani manuscript. Merrill, who apparently lacked fluency in Rajasthani, seems to have relied upon Kabir for interpretation; unfortunately, her account fails to clarify this point.

(2002, 106¹³⁰). Merrill makes no such claim. But the complexity of the case does not end there, for Vijay Dan Detha did not “invent” “Rijak ki Maryada”; he first heard this “folktale” from a “nameless barber” (ibid. 115). As with any folk tale, the barber’s version was by no means the original version. Detha’s contribution is however not a simple question of “scribing” for the anonymous (and illiterate) barber. In his capable hands, according to Merrill, this folk tale that had originally emphasized the cleverness of a secondary character—a barber—becomes a powerful tragedy as the main character finds himself caught in a series of events that he is well aware must ultimately lead to his own horrific death, unless he dishonour himself—which he does not, hence Merrill’s title, “Professional Honor”. Who is the real author of her English publication of this traditional folk tale, asks Merrill? Is it the copyrighted “author” in English? In Hindi? In Rajasthani? Or is the barber the true author? And if the barber, then why him rather than one or several of the numerous others who told and retold the tale over time? Shouldn’t the story be attributed to the very first person ever to tell it? But it is just as impossible to know who first created and told that story as it is to ever know how much resemblance there may be between the barber’s version that Detha heard and that hypothetical “original”.

A tale that’s been orally passed down over generations is bound to have undergone a number of changes since its creation. Was there a barber in the original? Possibly, but perhaps not; the barber is but a minor character after all, and the fact that a barber actually told the story raises suspicion—had the teller been a beggar, is it not just as likely the minor character would

¹³⁰ See also Merrill 2003, which deals with precisely the same dilemma from a slightly different perspective.

have also been a beggar? No, Detha did not “create” the tale, but he had the genius to recognise its full dramatic potential and the talent to “retell” it in writing in such a way as to exploit its tragic potential to the fullest.

Unfortunately, none of the foregoing does much to help resolve the “riddle” of the authorship of “Professional Honor”. As a riddle, it is very similar (almost identical) to the riddle that I struggled to solve throughout the writing of this thesis. Who is the “real” author of the books in which the story of crow is published (regardless of who might own the copyright)? Is it McGinty or is it Legros? Or is it Copper Joe? Or should not all of the countless generations of storytellers who nurtured it, each in turn, before passing it on until it was published in books by CMCC and Gallimard also receive full credit?

Christi Ann Merrill suggests one possible way out of the dilemma; “why not create a category called ‘storywriter’, which can apply equally to author and translator, and be used as the literary equivalent of a ‘storyteller’” (2002, 105-6). This may solve part of Merrill’s riddle for her: the unknown barber can be the “storyteller”; Vijay Dan Detha can be the “storywriter” in Rajasthani; Kailash Kabir can be the “storywriter” in Hindi, and Merrill can be the “storywriter” in English. But is this really satisfactory? Does Merrill’s artfulness as a translator, for example, equal Detha’s dramatic artfulness in transforming the barber’s folk tale into a dramatic short story? And does Detha’s own reportedly considerable artfulness equal, surpass or fall short of that of the original creator of the story? Ultimately sterile questions all, since whatever the answers might be, they can nowise help me decide who, between McGinty and Legros, is the true author of the published story of crow. I am therefore left with the reasoning first laid out above. Since neither

publications of the crow story could have existed in its published form without the major contributions of both men, both of whose individual contributions are moreover too tightly woven together to determine which contributed the most, the conclusion seems to me inescapable: Tommy McGinty should have received full credit as co-author of both books. That he did not and that neither did Julie Cruikshank's "collaborators", and that this is a common practice in Yukon and Alaskan ethnographic publications suggests that, as ethnographer Paul Rabinow argued more than twenty years ago¹³¹, an ethnography of ethnography is long overdue¹³².

THE TRANSLATOR'S FREEDOM

Translators are seldom free to translate exactly as they wish without interference. Even a translator of "pragmatic" texts has to operate within certain bounds. First of all, she must produce a translation that's acceptable to her client, but she also tries to produce a target text that's as close as she can make it to her source text while keeping in mind the particular needs of her readers, all the while striving to remain within the norms of her profession. Some may think that literary translators are a freer lot, but they are mistaken. Their work is a constant balancing act between their own personal inclinations and sense of ethics and fidelity to their author, the needs of their readers and the dictates of their publishers. As I have shown, ethnographic

¹³¹ See "Deloria's Grievances" (this thesis, 326-7).

¹³² In all fairness, note that the title of the 1999 Museum of Civilization, "Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow" explicitly attributes authorship of the crow story to Mr. McGinty. On the other hand, the Gallimard publication's title, "L'histoire du corbeau et Monsieur McGinty" does not.

translators (even “accoucheurs”) must obey their own sets of constraints. Tommy McGinty would have preferred to produce a translation into English that reflected only his own personal, political and esthetic views and agenda. But Dominique Legros’ probing comments, questions and occasional directions soon forced him to give his translation a marked ethnographic slant that he never would have given it on his own. Similarly, Legros had to heed constraints of his own. From the very start he had to constantly strive to produce the sort of text that would be acceptable as “ethnographic” by his peers and by his Canadian publisher’s internal and external “reviewers”, as Ms. Nicholette Prince calls the members of CMC’s Mercury series selection committee. That’s why he must have felt compelled to constantly interrupt Tommy McGinty’s translation to make him add a wealth of ethnographic details. But even that much detail must have appeared insufficient to him in retrospect since, as I have shown, he added considerably more in his French translation. His original French translation seems to have been relatively free of any other constraints than his own self-imposed goals of adding ethnographic details and using a language designed to best translate the Tutchone culture so as to make it as readily understandable as he could make it for his implied French readers. But all that changed when Jean Grosjean read it and imposed his own “distancing” constraint. As elegant as Legros’ solution to the thorny problem of satisfying both Grosjean and Désy was, the very fact of his having had to invent it demonstrates once more that translators never remain free agents for long. In reality, translators are almost never truly free agents except for the relatively short period of time during which they consider whether or not to translate. Once they’ve made the

fateful decision, they are subjected to a greater or lesser number of constraints, some of which are self-imposed (sense of ethics, unwritten rules and customs of their profession interiorised as norms), and many more which are imposed by external agents and factors over which they have little or no control—publisher, author, reading public, book reviewers, academics, colleagues, changing tastes, etc.

GROS MOTS

I have been troubled ever since finding out that several “bad words” appearing in the English text have either been translated with an equivalent “gros mot” in French (joual or langue populaire franco-française or both) or with an even stronger Franco-Français or Franco-Québécois non-equivalent. It was all the more so that Dr. Legros had told me as I prepared to leave for Pelly Crossing in March 2006 that in a recent telephone conversation Mary McGinty had objected to the presence of “bad words” in his Mercury Series edition of her father’s crow story. He said that he had told Mary that he had made sure that there were no offensive words in his French translation. Then, two years later, on our March 25, 2008 interview, when asked to react to the McGinty family’s grievances, Dr. Legros repeated his 2006 statement almost word for word.

For several months I could think of but one possible justification for Dr. Legros’ statement. I thought that it may have been his reasoning that, just as there are “no” dirty words in the Tutchone language, there are also “no” dirty words in the French language. If that was his reasoning, I thought, it may

also have been his reasoning that this would be virtually impossible to explain to a Tutchone person over the telephone and it would therefore be expedient to simply assure her that there are no dirty words in the French edition. To claim that there are no “dirty” words in the French language is moreover not as far-fetched as a non-native-French person might think. Certainly, no French “gros mot” has ever had “mud on its face” to the same extent that its closest English equivalent often has. To illustrate, take the word “con”. It is a word that is used freely by virtually every native French speaker in everyday ordinary conversation. And no one is ever offended by its use, except perhaps when it is aimed directly at them as a synonym for “imbécile”. And yet, should a person use the English translation of the French word “con” in everyday conversation among native English speakers, it could result in seriously negative consequences ensuing for the person who has been so rude and insensitive as to use such a word. And what is true for the word “con” is equally true for the vast majority of French “gros mots”. This difference between French and English is often the cause of much puzzlement and frequent faux pas for native French speakers who learn English as adults. A thorough explanation of why certain words should “sound cute and funny” in Tutchone, be ordinary everyday words in French and “have mud on their faces” in English could of itself be the topic of a doctoral dissertation; however, I do not doubt that such differences are symptomatic of basic socio-cultural differences between human groups.

In a recent personal communication Dr. Legros revealed that although my intuition was not precisely correct, it was nevertheless very close to the mark in that it is his belief that all of the words that he used in his French

translation were words that he felt confident would not now be considered “gros mots” either in France or in Québec. According to Legros, there is moreover a distinction to be made between “gros mots” that are said directly by Tommy McGinty and “gros mots” said by the characters in the story. Legros says that he eliminated all the “gros mots” from the “mouth” of McGinty with the exception of six occurrences which he somehow “overlooked”. He however kept all of the “gros mots” that were uttered by Crow and the other characters in the various Crow story episodes; though he rendered them into French with words that he felt certain would not be considered offensive by contemporary French speakers (personal communication, August 25, 2009).

DELORIA'S GRIEVANCES

Native American activist, Vine Deloria, Jr., argues, among many other things, that hordes of anthropologists invade American Indian reservations each summer, not to learn anything new, but simply to confirm what they have already learned in books that they read over the previous winter (1969, 80). Whether they agree with him or not, Deloria's grievances have made anthropologists aware “that their work is now constantly under the scrutiny of their research subjects” (Biolsi and Zimmerman 1997, 18).

Being aware that one's writing is sure to be scrutinised by those one writes about is however not the same as writing in ways that truly takes the needs of those one writes about into account. As we have seen, no matter how well intentioned, ethnographers have little choice but to shape their

writing and its content so as to satisfy a host of constraints, including the approval of their peers. On this matter, ethnographer Paul Rabinow has been insightful. As to the writing of ethnographic text, he argues it is all too easy to criticize the practices of the past, but,

Neither [James] Clifford nor any of the rest of us is writing in the late 1950s. [Our] audiences are neither colonial officers nor working under the aegis of colonial power. Our political field is more familiar: the academy in the 1980s. [...] One is led to consider the politics of interpretation in the academy today. Asking whether longer, dispersive, multi-authored texts would yield tenure might seem petty. But those are the dimensions of power relations to which Nietzsche exhorted us to be scrupulously attentive. There can be no doubt of the existence and influence of this type of power relation in the production of texts. We owe these less glamorous, if more immediately constraining, conditions more attention. The taboo against specifying them is much greater than the strictures against denouncing colonialism; an anthropology of anthropology would include them (1986, 252-253).

Note that Rabinow's singling out the pressures related to obtaining tenure fails to give a full sense of the peer pressure to which academic anthropologists, just like all academics, are routinely subjected—peer pressure that moreover persists long after academics have achieved tenure—throughout their careers, in fact. Rabinow's suggestion for an anthropology of anthropology was nevertheless a good one. Made over two decades ago, it does not, however, appear to have been seriously acted upon by anyone yet. It is always easier to criticise the practices of the remote past; the political fallout is never anywhere near as fraught. Meanwhile Aboriginal leaders like Cecil King of the Odawa Nation have stopped waiting for academics to adjust to evolving power relations. King's attitude is fast becoming prevalent among Aboriginal nations. He states that, as independent peoples, Aboriginals, Inuit and Métis claim the right to decide who does research in their territories and what researchers' priorities will be

and claim the right to scrutinize and veto what is ultimately published (1997, 118). As I learned through personal experience, many First Nations, including the Selkirk First Nation, now only allow research to be carried out within their territory for very specific projects and then only when such projects coincide with their own goals and needs.

MYTH OR STORY TELLING

Claude Lévi-Strauss' insight that all versions of a myth are equally part of the overall myth and that Freud's use of the Oedipus myth in psychoanalysis is an integral part of the overall Oedipus myth is an important one. "Myth" is however not the word that Aboriginal storytellers generally use. They have their own word for what ethnographers call "myths". They call them "stories". To them the "myth of Oedipus" would be "the story of Oedipus". Does that mean that Lévi-Strauss and Aboriginal storytellers are basically talking about the same thing? Of course it does, but they do not talk about or treat that "same thing" in the same way. It is very unlikely, for example, that any Aboriginal elder would dismiss the story of another people, the Ancient Greeks, say, as "just a story" in the way that many Westerners would dismiss the story of crow as "just a myth". Lévi-Strauss thinks about myths as the largely unconscious creation of "primitive" peoples. He believes that his structural analyses of these "myths" show that, among other things, they serve "primitives" (even though they are not themselves conscious of this) as a means of reconciling contradictory aspects of their culture. Aboriginals think of stories as something one tells and retells for a variety of

reasons, from expressing feelings to explaining how things came to be the way they are. An Aboriginal elder might suggest that Lévi-Strauss tells stories about other peoples' stories. They might further suggest that each one of Lévi-Strauss' stories about other peoples' stories are episodes in a larger story called structuralism. In the same way, Freud told a new story about the Ancient Greek story of Oedipus as an episode in a larger story called psychoanalysis.

In his youth Copper Joe must have heard the story of crow told many times by his elders, including no doubt by the famous Copper Chief. Copper Joe must have told that story himself many times throughout his life, each time giving it a somewhat different slant to suit the context of the telling. He must have told different episodes in slightly different ways each time, adding new details here, omitting a part that the Copper Chief had included there, all according to the purpose of that particular telling, for it is the context that dictated the slant given the story. Later in life, when he was himself one of the most respected among the elders, he was moved to tell the story to his grandson Tommy, no doubt partly because he enjoyed telling that story, but largely because it contains a great deal of what every Tutchone needs to know to live his life well and to be able to think through any situation that life might send his way—precisely the kind of knowledge with which a grandparent would want to equip a grandson. In turn, Tommy McGinty would no doubt also tell the crow story many times throughout his life, always reorganising and reslanting it all the better to accommodate the audience and the particular purpose of each given telling (educational, political, entertaining and so on). When the anthropologist asked him to tell him the story of crow,

he agreed and included the episodes that he deemed best suited to the occasion because most likely to bring about the results he sought (political, cultural, educational, etc.). When the anthropologist then asked him to translate his just completed telling into English, he simply retold it in that language—for everything indicates that that's how Tommy McGinty thought of translation, as retelling a story in another language. When he was asked to retell the crow story again in English some years later, this time for his own young people enrolled in a Yukon College course, he selected the episodes that seemed to him best suited for the occasion and most likely to produce the results he hoped for. This in turn made him emphasize certain aspects, while downplaying or omitting other aspects and even episodes that he didn't think useful to that particular telling's purpose.

In 1999 Dominique Legros retold the story that Tommy McGinty had given him. He retold it in writing in a book published by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. He slanted the story by giving it an ethnographic bent because he felt that best suited the mixed Euro-Canadian – Aboriginal audience context of that particular telling. As part of that telling he also told a story about how Tommy McGinty came to tell him that story; what he thinks of that story as an anthropologist; how he distilled his version of the story out of several separate tellings and from other, often unrelated conversations he'd had with McGinty; he also suggested ways in which future storytellers might use his version of the crow story to retell it orally themselves. He called the various episodes of that new story that he told, "Foreword", "Introduction" and "Afterword", and included them in the same book. In 2003 he was asked by Gallimard's representative, J.M.G. Le Clézio, to retell in French the stories

that he had told in English in 1999. He agreed and, as every storyteller does, availed himself of the occasion to re-slant his telling to suit the context of that particular telling. He added even more ethnographic details and used a unique blend of standard French, langue populaire franco-française and joual. In French he also retold that story that he'd told in 1999 about how McGinty had come to tell him that story in the first place. Both Tommy McGinty's tellings and Dominique Legros' tellings are now integral parts of the overall Northern Tutchone story of crow, which is itself an integral part of the overall raven story of North America and Siberia.

In one way or another, we all tell stories. I have told a story about the way that two men, an anthropologist and a Northern Tutchone elder, both told and retold the Northern Tutchone story of crow. I have slanted my story in ways that seem to me best suited for the context of this particular telling and I told the episodes that I thought best indicated for the occasion. My story is now told. As Tommy McGinty would say, "*Ti'aku!*"

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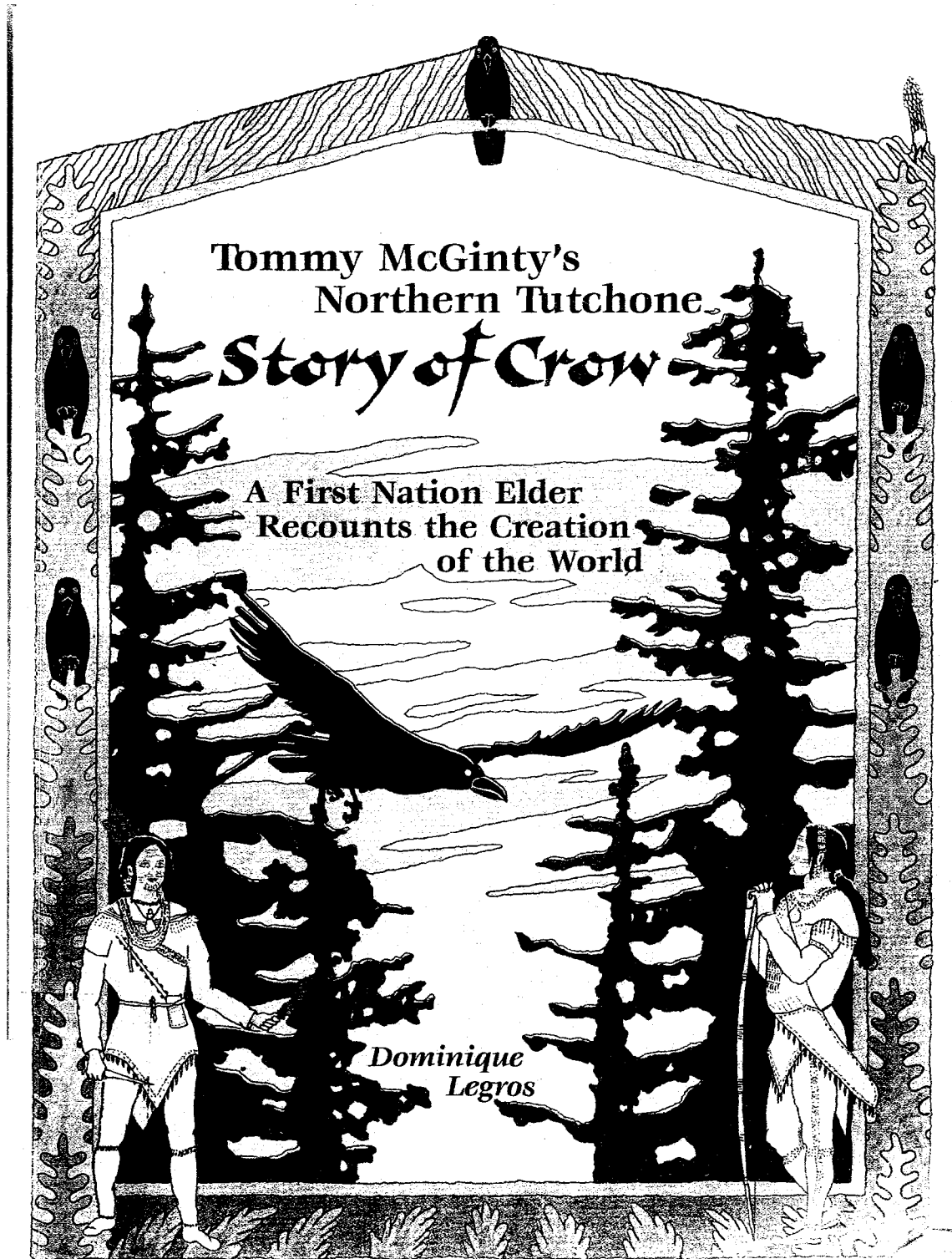
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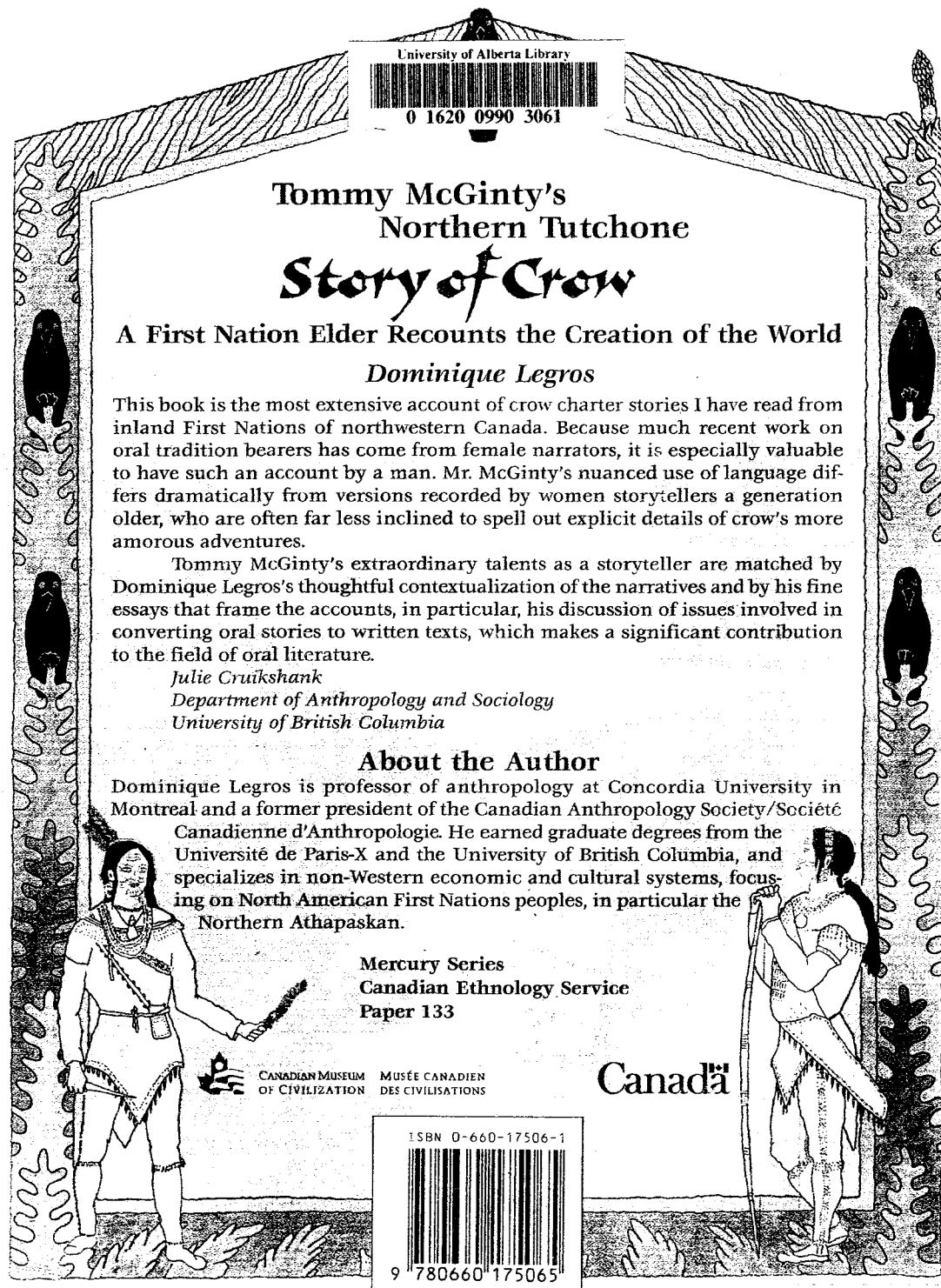
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Appendix 1a. The 1999 edition's front cover



Appendix 1b. The 1999 edition's back cover



Appendix 1c. An engraving based on Alexander Murray's original sketch

Tradition and Innovation: Clothing of the Athapaskans



Gwich'in hunters in summer clothing, 1847.
Engraving based on a sketch by fur trader Alexander Hunter Murray.
Rare Book Collection, National Library of Canada.
Library Archives of Canada, C-002169

(Copied June 21, 2009 from
http://www.allaboutshoes.ca/en/traditions_innovations/index.php?target_table=tradition_innovation_northern_athapaskan_footwear&sub_section=210)

Appendix 2. The 2003 edition covers



L'histoire du corbeau et Monsieur McGinty

Un Indien athapascan tutchone du Yukon raconte la création du monde

par Dominique Legros

Traduit et adapté de l'anglais (Canada) par l'auteur

Monsieur McGinty est un Indien athapascan tutchone du Grand Nord. Sa terre, c'est le Yukon, près de la frontière avec l'Alaska. Entre 1984 et 1991, Dominique Legros eut la chance de le rencontrer et d'enregistrer la longue histoire du corbeau. Monsieur McGinty était alors l'un des fameux conteurs tutchones, dans la tradition d'un peuple où la littérature orale est d'une grande valeur. De ces rencontres est né ce livre drôle, profond et merveilleux. Le corbeau est à la fois le héros créateur et l'auxiliaire des peuples du Grand Nord. Il est habile et rusé, prend la forme des humains, trompe son monde, séduit les femmes et, honte à lui, même sa belle-mère.

Dans un épisode, il parle à une vierge et se réincarne en faisant pénétrer son esprit dans le ventre de la jeune femme. Lorsque les missionnaires arrivèrent, les tutchones n'eurent donc aucun mal à être convaincus que Jésus n'était rien d'autre qu'une incarnation du corbeau. Un oiseau n'a-t-il pas parlé à la Vierge avant qu'elle n'ait elle-même un bébé ?

C'est le corbeau qui, au temps du déluge, reconstruisit la terre ferme telle qu'elle existe encore dans le Nord. C'est lui qui vola le feu, plaça au firmament le soleil, et créa les rivières et les lacs poissonneux. Il vécut des aventures burlesques, habilla le ventre d'un poisson-chat, et donna à certains hommes l'idée de se faire femme.

La force du livre de Dominique Legros est de nous faire entendre la voix de Monsieur McGinty, sa façon, son goût d'une langue riche et pleine d'humour pour décrire les choses de la nature. Les péripéties du corbeau nous entraînent dans le monde arctique, à la fois familier et radicalement étranger. Dominique Legros met ainsi au jour une nouvelle ethnologie qui fait ressembler de l'intérieur cet univers où religion et vie sont intimement mêlés. Plus qu'un témoignage, *L'histoire du corbeau* est une invitation à la découverte de l'autre. Comme le dit Dominique Legros : « Entrons d'abord par la grande porte dans l'univers athapascan de Monsieur McGinty. Laissons-le raconter ce que le corbeau a fait pour les hommes à l'aube des temps. Pour tous les hommes, quelles que soient leurs origines. Pour les autochtones, pour les Blancs, et pour tous les autres. »

J.M.G. Le Clezio

*Illustration de couverture :
Ned Hurdman. Le poisson-chat d'Indiguité, l'Inde.*



L'histoire du corbeau et Monsieur McGinty

par Dominique Legros

Traduit et adapté de l'anglais (Canada) par l'auteur

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L'aube des peuples

Appendix 3. Mrs. Lizzie Hall's working copy

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 91. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 92. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 93. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 94. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 95. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 96. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 97. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 98. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 99. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~
 100. ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~ ~~the~~ ~~doctor~~

2. Questioning - the main part of the lesson
 1. What is the main part of the lesson?

- What is the main part of the lesson?

3. What is the main part of the lesson?

4. What is the main part of the lesson?

(What is the main part of the lesson?)

(What is the main part of the lesson?)

- What is the main part of the lesson?

(What is the main part of the lesson?)

5. What is the main part of the lesson?

6. What is the main part of the lesson?

7. What is the main part of the lesson?

8. What is the main part of the lesson?

9. What is the main part of the lesson?

10. What is the main part of the lesson?

11. What is the main part of the lesson?

12. What is the main part of the lesson?

13. What is the main part of the lesson?

14. What is the main part of the lesson?

15. What is the main part of the lesson?

16. What is the main part of the lesson?

2012 June 20th
 2012 June 20th

10. $\in K/\mathbb{Q}$

- After get student on the line
asked 3000 marks 2000 marks
KCC. (now sub. 2000 marks)
manojkumar's marks 2000 marks
- when I asked about the marks
asked 3000 marks 2000 marks

Then the "seed" was given
to him, naturally, and he
thought, "well, now I can
get the old man to do it."

Let's think again how much I love you
 How dear to my heart you are

[illegible]

(stamped at 12:39)

Appendix 4: A draft of my report to the McGinty family and the Selkirk First Nation concerning their grievances about the publication of Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone story of crow

The grievances of the McGinty family, all of which are echoed by the representatives of the Selkirk First Nation Government, are essentially three in number: first, that Dominique Legros did not have the permission to publish Tommy McGinty's stories; second, that Dominique Legros earned a great deal of money from the sale of his books based on Tommy McGinty's stories and that he kept all that money for himself, without sharing any of the royalties with the SFN elders whose stories they are; third, that Dominique Legros has made Tommy McGinty use dirty words and talk about sex in the published book even though McGinty could not have used such words because "dirty words" do not even exist in the Northern Tutchone language and no Northern Tutchone elder would ever explicitly talk about sexuality in the way that Tommy McGinty is made to in the published book and therefore that all dirty words and explicit sexuality must have been added by Dominique Legros himself.

Let us now consider each grievance in turn.

DID DOMINIQUE LEGROS HAVE PERMISSION TO PUBLISH THE STORY OF CROW?

The first thing that must be determined is whose permission is meant exactly. One presumes it must be that of the McGinty family and the SFN Government, and, more precisely, that of the McGinty family and the SFN Government at the time when such a publication first became a possibility,

perhaps as early as 1984 and certainly in 1990-91. Let us first consider the SFN Government. According to Dominique Legros:

At the beginning of my last long fieldwork (1990-91), [the SFN] band council requested as a condition to my planned study that I now research and write *for* Them, and not *on* Them for *Them* in the outside world, "down South." Although worded less abruptly, in short, it requested that I become a scribe to Mr. Tommy McGinty, one of the most learned elders in Tutchone culture and a long-time friend and ethnographic consultant. After discussion, part of Mr. Tommy McGinty's project became taping in English all the sacred Tutchone narratives he knew and having me write them down as well as getting them published (this statement is taken from page 19 in Dominique Legros's 1999 book entitled *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow: A First Nation Elder Recounts the Creation of the World* published in the Mercury Series of the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull (Québec) —the italics are in the original).

A "request" from the band council that Dr. Legros "scribe" for an illiterate elder, does not however mean formal permission to publish the words of that elder. When I asked SFN Government officials if such a formal permission was ever granted, they denied any knowledge of it. In all fairness it must however be pointed out that the very idea of such permissions is a very recent development. In the past it seldom occurred to anyone that any such permission might be needed. The very idea of the need for academics to seek and for First Nations Governments to grant such permissions is in fact so recent that the Selkirk First Nation Government had yet to finalise its permission-granting protocol when I made a formal request to work with Mrs. Hall in 2006. And though I completed a formal "Request for permission to conduct research" application form at the specific recommendation of Ms. Emma Alfred (then SFN cultural affairs officer) and Ms. Beverly J. Brown (then SFN natural resources officer), and duly delivered the completed form to Ms. Brown, who acknowledged receipt by email on September 11, 2006, nothing concrete (and certainly no formal permission) ever resulted. It is my

understanding that this situation remains unchanged in 2009. In the meantime, no permissions are being granted to anyone. Nineteen years ago in 1990-91, and twenty-five years ago in 1984, conditions differed. At the time, as best as I have been able to discover, it never occurred to anyone in the SFN Government that any sort of permission to publish the words of the SFN elders needed to be granted by anyone other than by the elders in question.

Given that from some time before 1984 until he passed away in 1993, Tommy McGinty was in effect the "head" of the McGinty family, the question boils down to this: did Dominique Legros have Tommy McGinty's permission to publish his story of crow narrative? Legros writes:

Mr. McGinty's wish to have the narrative taped and written down in English came from a fear that failure to do so might lead to its definitive demise. [...] As Mr. McGinty could not read or write, his aim was to have a scribe (myself) who could provide public schools in Tutchone villages with a written version of this narrative. His hope was that Euro-Canadian teachers could thus pass it down for generations to come especially to indigenous children, teenagers, native young men and women who no longer had any grandpa knowledgeable in indigenous oral literature and language (this statement is taken from page 23 in Dominique Legros's 1999 book entitled *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow: A First Nation Elder Recounts the Creation of the World* published in the Mercury Series of the Canadian Museum of Civilization of Hull, Québec).

On March 25, 2008, when I asked him to react to the McGinty family's and the SFN Government representatives' charge that he did not have permission to publish McGinty's stories, here is what Dr. Legros told me:

The whole problem lies on a misunderstanding. In 1990 Mr. McGinty lent me his old house that was empty and a few paces from his new house so that I could work with him and him with me. He let me live there from about June 1990 to August 1991. I am very grateful for that. He came to visit me often and never needed to ask me for it. In the grievance such as you report it to me, everyone seems to agree that he trusted me and I confirm that I had his trust and that I trusted him too [see comment immediately following]. Now he asked me many times to make the story of crow into a book. His aim is explained in the book pages 19 and 23; see also 15 and 29. To him the story was like a Bible story, as I explain in the book pages 15 and 23. It is to be noted that the story does not belong to the Tutchone people alone; it is shared by all Athapaskan Indians. Mr. McGinty also wanted me to have his other stories and

what he told me about Indian laws and animals made into books so that younger Tutchone people could read them and learn from what he knew—these later projects I have not yet been able to publish. He and I specifically used the word “book” several times at different intervals over more than a year. In my mind there was and is no question that he understood what a book was. During our taping sessions I often referred to and read aloud to him short parts of [Julie] Cruikshank’s hard cover book with the stories of Elders from the Southern Yukon—I mention that in the book pages 100-101. He held the book in his hand. I told him that I would put his stories of crow in a book like this one. He approved of it and seemed proud of it. To make a name for oneself is not foreign to Tutchone culture as you can see in the first matches episode in the book pages 106-7. There the crow enjoined the Koshekok, his owl nephew, to make a name for himself by bringing back sparks from the sky so that people might light fire with them. Mr. McGinty was pleased at the idea of making a name for himself with his stories put into books. He also knew from way before that as an anthropologist part of my job was to publish the information I heard on Tutchone history, culture, and so on. He had seen some of my journal articles. With him, I also used in front of him Catharine McClelland’s ethnography of the Southern Tutchone and Tagish. And we discussed that book as a project similar to the one we were doing.

During my stay in Pelly Crossing nobody—band officers, family members or others—ever came to see me to tell me that I needed more than the permission of Mr. McGinty to publish his version of the story of crow and his other stories. No such additional permission was ever mentioned to me after 1991 until 2007. I now detect that some may have been against the whole project from the beginning. But I then did not know anything about that and Mr. McGinty never reported to me these other people’s worries. I just learned of that subject from you [Philippe Cardinal] this March 2008. So when I embarked upon the taping and later on the writing of the story, I felt that I had not only the permission but the duty to honour the promise I had made to Mr. McGinty to publish his version of the story of crow in book format. The McGinty family knows very well that he had adopted me as his nephew and me, him as my uncle, which in Tutchone culture means total mutual help between us two. So I acted only on the promise I had made to him.

I hereby swear that I would never have embarked on so much unpaid work had I been told that I needed an additional permission—from whom?—beyond that of Mr. McGinty. If I had known, I would have cleared the need for the possible additional permission right away. There was no money to be made, only hard work to be carried out by me, and in the end big problems as now proven by the grievances. The whole accusation seems to rest on an idea that I did not seek that second hypothetical permission because I wanted to make money in secret out of Mr. McGinty’s story. But as I will explain, the contrary is true; I made no money in royalties whatsoever out of this writing and publication project. There was none to be made. And I did not seek to make any for myself. On the contrary, I gave a lot of my time for free to the cause of Tutchone culture so that the story could get published as Mr. McGinty wanted it.

In the first paragraph above, where Legros says “everyone seems to agree that he [Tommy McGinty] trusted me”, he is referring to the following quote of what one McGinty family representative told me and that I repeated

to him when he asked me to specify the accusations levelled at him: "When Tommy worked with Dominique, SFN people would often ask him, 'Are you sure this white man will do right by you?' Tommy always answered, 'Yes, all that he is doing is for the good of the people.' But Dominique took advantage of that old man at the end of his life." As Legros points out, coming from one of his accusers, this direct quotation of McGinty's routine answer to his fellow SFN members' cautionary questions regarding his collaboration with the anthropologist corroborates Legros' own statement that Mr. McGinty trusted him.

It is safe to say, therefore, that Dominique Legros did not have formal (written) permission to publish Tommy McGinty's story of crow from the SFN Government—and he does not claim to have had such permission. It is equally safe to say that all the evidence, some of it coming from one of his very accusers, points to his having had Tommy McGinty's full, orally-granted, permission to publish not only his narration of the story of crow, but his other stories and the ethnographic data obtained through him as well.

DID DR. LEGROS MAKE A LOT OF MONEY FROM THE SALE OF HIS BOOKS BASED ON TOMMY MCGINTY'S STORIES AND THEN FAIL TO SHARE HIS ROYALTIES WITH THE SFN ELDERS WHOSE STORIES THEY WERE BASED UPON?

When I questioned her, Ms. Nicholette Prince, Curator, Plateau Ethnology for the Canadian Museum of Civilization (which published the English language version in its Mercury Series) stated that no royalties of any sort were ever paid to anyone for *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow*. The book's copyright has moreover always been and is still owned by the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation (CMCC). Ms. Prince further

stated that all the tasks related to manuscript preparation and editing were entirely the author's (Dominique Legros) responsibility. CMCC only paid for the book's design and printing. There is nothing unusual in that for, according to Ms. Prince, this is standard CMCC practice for all of its Mercury Series publications.

About Gallimard's French publication of the same book, Legros told me on March 25, 2008 that "the copyright to the English original remained and still is vested in the Canadian Museum of Civilization. I received nothing from the Museum for the giving to Gallimard of the right to translate into French and I know for sure that the Museum asked nothing for that right to Gallimard." He further explained that he did receive an undisclosed small sum of money from Gallimard for his translation of the English manuscript into French, which, he says, "corresponds to seven cents per word, not even fourteen cents a word, the very minimum rate [paid for literary translation] in Canada. I received that for my translation work, not for the sale of a story which is copyrighted by the Museum. In turn the Museum did not sell but gave its translation copyright to Gallimard."

I tried to contact Gallimard in the hope of obtaining corroboration of this, much as I had obtained corroboration from Ms. Prince for the Canadian Museum of Civilization publication. In spite of Gallimard's failure to cooperate in this matter, I nevertheless believe Dominique Legros when he denies receiving any royalties whatever from Gallimard. Ms. Prince is very clear: CMCC retained all the rights to the publication of Tommy McGinty's crow story. That being so, why would Gallimard pay royalties to one who has no rights to a book it publishes? As for the undisclosed sum of money that Gallimard paid

Dominique Legros for his translation work, what could be more normal? We translators generally expect to get paid for our translation work. SFN elders understand this principle well; they also expect to be paid for their translation work.

To sum up, there is no evidence to support the McGinty family's and SFN officials' charge that Dominique Legros made a lot of money from the sales of his books based on Tommy McGinty's stories; quite the contrary, he made no money at all; he wrote his share of the book, edited McGinty's stories and prepared the manuscript for publication, all on his own time and at his own expense. Consequently, there are no grounds whatever in support of the further charge that he failed to share the profits from the sales of the book with SFN elders; there was no such profit.

WHO PUT THE DIRTY WORDS AND THE SEXUALITY IN TOMMY MCGINTY'S TEXT?

According to the McGinty family, their patriarch cannot possibly have used "dirty words" in his English translation of his own Northern Tutchone story of crow because there are no words like those English dirty words in Northern Tutchone. In fact, they say, the Northern Tutchone language has no dirty words at all. That being so, they say, it has to be Dominique Legros who added those words because Tommy McGinty never even knew such words existed. When I interviewed him on March 28, 2008, Dominique Legros agreed:

Yes, indeed, Mr. McGinty also explained to me that words in Tutchone are never like dirty words in English. This is important and very positive for Tutchone culture. I quote his explanation in the book page 144. Note that that passage is not part of the story, but like a footnote written on the basis of a

conversation with Mr. McGinty. However, for reasons which I explain in the book I did not resort to the artifice of footnotes.

Here is the statement that Dominique Legros is referring to:

Whiteman way, *druu* means cunt. But *druu* doesn't sound bad in Indian language. I don't know why cunt looks dirty in English. It's a surprise to me! Maybe the Whiteman has no respect for the woman's own. This may be why? But there are lots of other words like that too. They sound cute and funny in Indian; and, Whiteman way, they all have mud on their faces" (this statement is taken from page 144 in Dominique Legros's 1999 book entitled *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow: A First Nation Elder Recounts the Creation of the World* published in the Mercury Series of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Québec).

About the translation of such words into French, on March 25, 2008, Dr. Legros told me: "In early March 2006, when Mary [McGinty] first mentioned to me on the phone the problems with dirty words in the English book, I reassured her that the French edition has none at all." In a recent personal communication, however, Dr. Legros stated that his original statement had been unclear and that he had really meant to say that he had taken most such words out of the mouth of Mr. McGinty while leaving them in the mouth of crow, tuundy and the other characters in the story, he also explained that when he translated Tommy McGinty's story of crow into French, he was careful to select only words that would not be considered dirty words either in France or in Québec. Dr. Legros also wanted me to keep in mind that although many of the words that he selected, if translated into English would be considered "dirty" by the McGinty family and the SFN, the majority of such words are not now considered dirty by most French speaking people.

We know that Tommy McGinty translated his own story of crow into English for Dominique Legros. All of his self-translation was done orally and

recorded on tape by Dominique Legros in August 1984. I have obtained copies of every one of those tapes, which are available for purchase by researchers from the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, where Dr. Legros has deposited all of the original McGinty self-translation tapes. Having spent many hours listening closely to and comparing Mr. McGinty's self-translation into English to the text of each episode appearing in the book, I can personally vouch that Mr. McGinty did utter all of the so-called "bad words" himself. In all fairness though, Dr. Legros points out that when he used these sexually explicit words, it was always in a "man to man" context, and that when women were present Mr. McGinty was more careful of his language. In addition, while I was in Pelly Crossing in 2006, a competent native Northern Tutchone translator, whose identity I will not disclose because of my duty to protect my informants' identity so as to avoid any future unpleasantness befalling them as a result of their collaborating with me, told me after listening to the tapes that Tommy McGinty had also used sexually explicit words in his 1984 taped narration of the story of crow in Northern Tutchone.

As to Tommy McGinty's use of such words in English, Dominique Legros told me the following during our March 25, 2008 interview:

Mr. McGinty learned English from sailors on the steamers and White trappers and knew such words from them. He also used them in English, if and when needed, and mainly when speaking man to man. Note also that Mr. McGinty was more careful when women were around. Many of these words are on the tapes I did with him face to face, man to man. This does not mean that he used them all the time, like some young Indians or Whites do nowadays. But neither does he in the book.

According to Dr. Legros, Tommy McGinty's main reason for recording the crow story was so that it could be published into a book for the use of Aboriginal schoolchildren. Did he lose sight of that fact at times? For he

certainly used what his daughters now call “dirty words” on the tapes of his English translations. His videotaped Yukon College performance in the presence of many school-aged children clearly shows, moreover, that he never downplayed sexuality, no matter what the context of the telling.

ONE POSSIBLY LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCE

One grievance that might have been founded, had it been expressed by the McGinty family and/or SFN officials would be that Dominique Legros failed to fully honour his promise to Tommy McGinty in at least one respect. In Dominique Legros’ own words:

As Mr. McGinty could not read or write, his aim was to have a scribe (myself) who could provide public schools in Tutchone villages with a written version of this narrative. His hope was that Euro-Canadian teachers could thus pass it down for generations to come, especially to indigenous children, teenagers, native young men and women who no longer had any grandpa knowledgeable in indigenous oral literature and language (this excerpt is taken from page 23 of Dominique Legros’ 1999 book entitled *Tommy McGinty’s Northern Tutchone Story of Crow: A First Nation Elder Recounts the Creation of the World*, which was published in the Mercury Series of the Canadian Museum of Civilization of Hull in Québec).

Dominique Legros writes that he became Tommy McGinty’s “scribe”. He could be said, however, to have been a “wilful” scribe in the sense that not only did he produce copies of McGinty’s story of crow; he also added substantial ethnographic information to the story. He seems to have taken his ethnographer’s task of “translating culture” so much to heart that he largely lost sight of what he reports to have been Tommy McGinty’s main goal, the education of Tutchone children and youth.

Sandwiched as it is between the two halves of what amounts to an ethnographic monograph, and considerably augmented with ethnographic

data, it is difficult to conceive of the book's having any but a negative appeal for "native young men and women" who haven't reached the university level. But if this does not appear to be considered as a grievance by the McGinty family and SFN officials—in any event, not one that they chose to share with me—there is reason to believe that they may be taking remedial action of their own. In return for allowing me to work with Mrs. Lizzie Hall to produce an independent retranslation of Tommy McGinty's original oral Tutchone text I agreed to provide the family and the SFN with transcripts of Mrs. Hall's retranslation. During the negotiations that produced this agreement, one of the most ardent advocates of such an arrangement was Mary McGinty. "We're going to publish it ourselves," she told me and the others present. I can quote her exact words because I recorded them in my field journal a few minutes after the meeting, when they were still vivid in my mind. At the same time I also noted that Mary had briefly explained that this would be useful to teach the kids in school, though I did not record her precise wording. Coming from Mary McGinty, these statements are especially meaningful because, in addition to being a spokesperson for the McGinty family, Mary McGinty is the SFN Government's education officer. As such, she is the person in charge of the SFN education system, from kindergarten to college.

As to why he did not himself remove the words that may be deemed inappropriate for children's ears, Dr. Legros recently told me that as an anthropologist he did not think that he should in any way modify any of the stories narrated by Tommy McGinty, no matter how risqué their content might be. In the 1999 book, however, he suggested the following:

"In the case of children who have already been rendered too shy about the sexual dimension of human life, it is hoped that parents will be able to rephrase

the episodes concerned in a way that reflects their own values on how and to what extent one may talk about actual sexual activities. (This quotation is taken from pages 37 and 38 of Dominique Legros' 1999 book entitled *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow: A First Nation Elder Recounts the Creation of the World*, which was published in the Mercury Series of the Canadian Museum of Civilization of Hull in Québec).

CONCLUSION

To sum up, all of the existing evidence shows that the McGinty family's and the Selkirk First Nation Government's grievances against Dr. Dominique Legros are largely unfounded. Everything I've been able to discover points to Legros having duly received the only permission to publish that it would have been possible for him to get at the time of publication: Tommy McGinty's. That Mr. McGinty had really wanted Dominique Legros to publish his telling of the crow story is virtually a certainty. As to who put the "dirty" words and the sexuality in Tommy McGinty's story of crow, there can be no doubt that it was McGinty himself. In all fairness, however, Dominique Legros must share in that responsibility, for not only is he entirely responsible for the final published text, but, as he has pointed out, he was well aware that McGinty did not use the most potentially offensive of the sexually explicit words when women were present, and yet he chose to publish the words that McGinty himself reserved for "face to face, man to man" contexts. Tommy McGinty, as has already been stated, never downplayed the sexual aspect of the crow story, no matter who was present for any given telling. Furthermore, the evidence demonstrates clearly that Dominique Legros never received any royalties at all for his publications of the story of crow, and that he moreover worked long hours over several years for no pay except for translating the English book into French. This being so, the charge that he failed to share the royalties for the

story of crow with Tutchone elders is not founded in reality. Finally, even though neither the SFN Government representatives, nor the McGinty family representatives ever mentioned this, it is my honest opinion that although Dr. Legros did keep his promise to Tommy McGinty to publish his story of crow, to a certain extent he actually failed to keep one aspect of his promise since, as Mr. McGinty's own daughters made it clear, his book is not in a format that could serve to educate Tutchone school children or youths.